This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

4N
(Child, F.J.)
Child

A SCHOLAR'S LETTERS TO A YOUNG LADY

ASTOR, LENOX
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS

F. J. Child

A SCHOLAR'S LETTERS TO A YOUNG LADY

PASSAGES FROM THE LATER CORRESPONDENCE
OF
FRANCIS JAMES CHILD

"Peu de choses, mais roses"

BOSTON
THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY PRESS
A.M.P.

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY
388419A
ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS
R 1912 L

Copyright, 1920, by
THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY PRESS

OF THE LIMITED EDITION OF 585 COPIES
THIS IS NUMBER 492

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

FRANCIS JAMES CHILD (Photogravure) . . *Frontispiece*

WOODCUT "MARRED" BY VERSES 21

"WHAT IT HAS COST ME TO PICK UP PINS" . . 68

PROFESSOR CHILD IN HIS GARDEN 102

FRANCIS JAMES CHILD

"WHEN he died the world lost much more than one of its great scholars." So wrote Charles Eliot Norton soon after the death of his classmate, friend, colleague, and kinsman by marriage, Francis James Child, Professor of English in Harvard University; and, to confirm these words, he characterized the great scholar as follows: "Original, quaint, humorous, sweet, sympathetic, tender-hearted, faithful,— these are the terms which first come to mind in describing him; the traits that these terms imply pervaded all his intelligence, gave character to his work, and made his learning the least part of him."

Professor Child — Mr. Child, as he was far more generally called in Cambridge — died September 11, 1896, nearly twenty-five years ago. In the years that have intervened no attempt has been made to embody his memory in a book. Separate articles about him — notably the paper by Norton in the *Harvard Graduates' Magazine* from which a few words have just been taken, and another by Professor G. L. Kittredge in the *Atlantic Monthly* — gave to readers in the closing years of the nineteenth century some conception of his work and personality. At this late day a full-length portrait is not to be expected.

The bare outlines of such a portrait would be found in the following facts: that Francis James

Child was born in Boston, February 1, 1825; that he was prepared at the Boston Latin School for Harvard College, where he became the first scholar in the class of 1846, containing such men (besides Norton) as George Frisbie Hoar, Fitzedward Hall, and George Martin Lane; that immediately on his graduation he entered, also at Harvard, upon his profession of teaching, practised in the same place for fifty continuous years, through the course of which he attained preëminent rank in the scholarship that bore its abundant fruit in the ten volumes of his "English and Scottish Popular Ballads"; and that all his work and friendships had the happiest background in the family life that followed upon his marriage with Elizabeth Ellery Sedgwick, of Stockbridge, who with their four children survived him. To construct a complete biography is not at all the present purpose, but merely to present the reflection of a distinctive and rarely beloved personality in the mirror held unconsciously by himself, through the last dozen years of his life, before his daily habits of thought and work — a reflection reduced to a certain permanence through the *fixatif* of letters, now after many years put into print.

In one of these letters he speaks of his few "superstitions," which he enumerates as "love of women, roses (including apple-blossoms), popular poetry, Shakspere, my friends, wild flowers, trees, violin music, *voila!*" It is not so fantastic as it may

seem to relate this series of nouns to the series of adjectives which Norton employed in describing his friend. Indeed it will be found that the one group of words truly supplements the other : a man with the objects of devotion which Child himself named would have been just such a man as Norton defined in the terms that have been quoted.

On the "love of women" which stands first in the autobiographic list of attributes his widow, writing soon after his death to the recipient of the letters which make up this volume, threw a significant light. "He always had, from the beginning of my knowledge of him," she wrote, "friendships with women, at first near his own age, with whom he habitually corresponded, and whose letters came like fresh breezes from without, and then, as time went on, with younger friends. Among these letters, very conspicuous, were the little notes in gray which announced themselves before opening, and promised something new and entertaining to give a lift to the first hour of morning work." In letters of his own Child wrote : "Loves of fourteen and under have always been delightful to me. When I was twenty-four I was a perfect victim to a girl of twelve"; and again: "I should have been a much more voluminous producer, if I had not spent about half my life in loving people." His friends among women and his roses stood side by side in his love; and his cultivation of the flowers was rather a

sacred rite than a superstition. He was constantly likening one of these categories of his devotion to the other, as something of which the merely masculine was unworthy, something closely akin to poetry and music and all spiritual beauty. In the pages that follow, the lover of roses will find many terms approaching the ultimate of expression for the true initiate in the mysteries of their worship.

Of his other "superstitions," perhaps the foremost was his love of friends. With this sentiment the very warp and woof of his existence were filled as with a texture. The literature of friendship itself is enriched by the passages in these letters relating to James Russell Lowell — the friend who remained "Jamie" to Child while he was Minister to Great Britain, the friend whose death was so devastating, yet so nobly chronicled, an event in the life of the stay-at-home scholar. One need not look far in the Letters of Lowell to learn the place held by Child in his affections. The dear friend and neighbor, William James, wrote of him in one of the letters appearing almost simultaneously with these: "I *loved* Child more than any man I know"; and in another: "He had a moral delicacy and a richness of heart that I never saw and never expect to see equalled." In still another place he wrote: "I had often said that the best argument I knew for an immortal life was the existence of a man who deserved one as well as Child did." Less succinctly

Henry James, in characteristic vein, defined him in "Notes of a Son and Brother": "delightful man, rounded character, above all humanist and humorist. As he comes back to me with the quite circular countenance of the time before the personal cares and complications of life had quite gravely thickened for him, his aspect, all finely circular, with its golden rims of the largest glasses, its finished rotundity of figure and attitude, I see that there was the American spirit, since I was 'after it,' of a quality deeply inbred; beautifully adjusted to all extensions of knowledge and taste, and as seemed to me quite sublimely quickened by everything that was, at the time, so tremendously in question."

Another of his "superstitions," not included in his own catalogue, was his love of country, manifested in the highest ideals and practice of citizenship. He was indeed an ardent patriot. Soon after his death one of his college pupils of the Civil War period recalled an incident which for its suggestion of a life-long concern for the public interest may well be brought to mind: "Previous to Lincoln's reëlection in 1864 he said to his classes: 'Next Tuesday I must serve my country, and there will be no recitations.' So he did, distributing Republican ballots all day in front of Lyceum Hall. If I remember rightly, he did the same at the important congressional election in 1866." Instead of distributing ballots Child would have been serving in

the Army of the Union had the state of his eyes enabled him to pass muster for military enrollment. Nevertheless he served according to his unique capacity by compiling an army song-book under the title, "War Songs for Freemen." Some of the songs he wrote himself; friends who were capable of verse, including Lowell, Holmes, Whittier, and Julia Ward Howe, were called upon for words to fit the melodies that were printed with them, and the regiments which took the little books to the front actually used them there. Thus both with ballots and with ballads — the implement of influence in which his hand was most highly skilled — he served his country in its time of need.

President Eliot has recently written in an unpublished letter: "In all the relations of life Professor Child's chief characteristics were of the gentle, sweet, genial, friendly sort; but there was another side to him. He was capable of feeling and expressing sudden and strong indignation, and in these moments he could speak sharply and even fiercely, but nevertheless in a way that did not exasperate his immediate opponents or the person he was condemning. . . . Professor Child was, in the fifties, an ardent reformer in municipal politics. He was in the habit of attending the caucuses and other public meetings which were called in Cambridge to nominate candidates for municipal office, or to further measures of reform in the city. At these

meetings he was very outspoken and was apt to be vehement. At a meeting in 1856 to nominate candidates for the Board of Aldermen and the Common Council, Professor Child spoke so hotly against proposals made by the Irish boss of the moment, and expressed so vigorously his opinion of the boss himself, that a number of his friends and associates gathered round him at the end of the meeting to accompany him on his way to the cars. In the vestibule of the building, the boss, who had been so vigorously denounced, approached Professor Child with his hand out, and offered him a bunch of cigars, saying, 'Have a cigar, Professor; don't you smoke?' Professor Child looked at him very keenly for an instant, smiled, and remarked, 'Yes, I do. I can match you in any of your *little* vices.' And he lighted his cigar from the boss's. The friends who had surrounded Professor Child drew apart without a word. The incident illustrated the temperament of Professor Child, his capacity for wrath, and the improbability that the persons to whom his wrathful words were addressed would take any offense, such was the transparency of his motives and the charm of his nature."

"Mere froth" Child considered such letters as those that follow—"affection in spray," "*peu de choses, mais roses.*" They were something more to his correspondents, and it is felt, not only that his

friends and lovers, the old and those who were young in his older days, will enjoy the refreshing of a tender memory, but also that a circle in which he was personally unknown will extend itself far enough to include an unstudied practitioner of that happy art of letter-writing of the quality one associates with Charles Lamb and Edward FitzGerald. In one of his own letters Henry James has written: "The best letters seem to me the most delightful of all written things — and those that are not the best the most negligible. If a correspondence, in other words, has not the real charm, I would n't have it published even privately; if it has, on the other hand, I would give it all the glory of the greatest literature." There is no small measure of confidence that the letters here assembled truly embody this charm.

Of their recipient it needs only to be said that she was a young lady whom Child, as "a relation, after a sort," had known since her girlhood, but with whom his really intimate friendship began when the death of one held dear by each — a member of his elder generation—brought them into a new and close sympathy. Her life in the world of society stood in a strong contrast — of which he appreciated all the humorous implications—with his own somewhat cloistral existence. From signing himself F. C. he drifted quaintly to the expansion of these initials into "Father Confessor,"

and "Fra Cisterciensis," or "Fra Cist.," from which it was an easy transition to "Fra Franciscus," and "Fra Fra," a signature which he was wont to precede and follow by crosses. All the imagery of monasticism — the cell, the scourge, the hair shirt, confession, and shrift — afforded abundant play for his fancy. But the core of the letters consists in their essential revealing of his devotion to his several "superstitions." In the exercise of at least one of them he habitually expressed his sentiments in terms of affection which, reduced to the black and white of the printed page, will perhaps convey the impression of extravagance. But those who valued him most highly were not the most literal-minded; and to them his seeming extravagances revealed the intrinsic warmth of his own nature, and nothing else. So accustomed were they to his fanciful exuberance of expression that they could never misunderstand it. Thus it will be with all who read the following pages aright.

Of quite secondary concern, therefore, is the identity of the private persons who figure in his correspondence. Editorial notes of explanation are accordingly reduced to a minimum, and initials are generally substituted for names. Casual as many of the letters may appear, rescued as they are from a "blindness" of hand-writing that has seemed at times to lie quite beyond legibility, they illustrate, both in spirit and in form, a phrase

on which their writer placed a peculiar value, a phrase which exquisitely fits so true and so unselfish a man and scholar : *meliora latent.*

M. A. DeWolfe Howe.

The Atlantic Office, July, 1920.

LETTERS

A SCHOLAR'S LETTERS TO A YOUNG LADY

Friday, May —, 1883.

We are on the very verge of a grand reception (by the Ashburners) for L——, 300 invited. Misery *hates* company, and as I have been forced to groan before — company, villainous company hath been the undoing of me — I do not mean to go — have not the energy to dress — should feel lost in the crowd — am as usual tired — have a pile of examinations which ought to be begun upon (but will not today, I *fear*) — all these reasons. But since there will be no object in my writing after you have the society of L——, — will there? — I must seize my last chance, for she goes to you on Monday. I waved triumphantly or vaingloriously, or what not, your last note at her, and she saw the address and subscription, that's all, for I wished her to think you had written deep things to your confessor. . . .

We rode into town together in the best of all carriages — the open street-car — she to lunch, I to Barnum's. She talked a little about you, but very little did I learn from the gay and sportive L—— about her sister. To make up for that, she can tell you more than you may care to hear about me: what a hobbler I am, how decrepit in body, in mind

how morose, and so on; all of which depicted by L——'s facile tongue, as seen by her penetrating woman's vision, will make a subject for some five spare minutes.

I hope she will tell you that the roses I am just from are not looking so badly. . . .

May 28, 1884.

May will soon be May not, so snatch the day! R—— tells me that you are establishing a flower-bed, a rose-bed. Now is not that a delightful way of bringing our thoughts together? Have you put in Alfred Colomb, Pierre Notting, Charles Lefebvre, Louis Van Houtte, François Michelon, Mme. Crapelet, Mme. Gabrielle Luizet, Eugénie Verdier, Souvenir de Charles Martault, Marie Baumann, the Common Moss? Of course you have, because these are my dears. But whatever you have put in will, I am sure, do his best and her best for you. I do not know why any rose is called after a man. It is an indignity.

Here is our little L——, sweet and bright as any flower that grows, with a little tear under her petals; gleaming about our grass and gravel two or three times a day. We all adore her truly, and are sorry to have for the first time to be sorry for her. May we never have to be again.

I have finished — excepting finishing — another college year. It ought to make me feel very old,

but there is no time. As soon as one thing is done I must begin another. I don't mean that as soon as I have written a *billet-doux* to you, I must execute a second. To whom? Nay, but some tiresome thing I must take up. Which shall it be, the one or the other? I will not even write a sad letter that I owe for a dear young friend who died suddenly in Paris. I cannot today.

If I could get hold of L—— I would make her tell me a great deal about you. She has always aunts and sisters about. There will be no opportunity. But I look to see you in July, when all the dishes, which have been in use at this *banquet de la vie,* have been washed and put away for a time. Methinks I shall be so tired that you will think me a stock. But there is an old stock in our street that is shooting out green sprouts, though cut down within two feet of the ground. You can say :

> "Sure thou didst flourish once, and many springs,
> Many bright mornings, much dew, many showers
> Passed o'er thy head, many light hearts and wings,
> Which now are dead, lodged in thy living bowers."

Another of my nothings. Adieu, with love,

F. C.

June 27, 1884 (?).

Vacation has begun, more by token that I recklessly spent the morning in cutting off ruined roses. R. B. wrote me a few days ago that your roses were

coming out. Then they did not come out by hundreds and thousands in the course of that hot week beginning a fortnight ago: and I shall be glad to think so. Ah, what a short season, with four hot days and four rains, and some hard blows of wind! But never were my roses so beautiful. I have had few people to see them and of the few only a few that had a *call* to look at roses: good people, *bonnes mères de famille probes,* as Mlle. Le Clerc said of the women of Cambridge (she added *mais pas un attrait*), but, with respect to roses, ignorant, uninspired, or even frivolous.

Now if I could have had you here for that fortnight! Perhaps you would have consented to go out now and then early in the morning, but that is not so essential, since you could go out from 5½ to 7 P.M. (Some days you would have the fence lined with small boys and girls clamoring or doggedly waiting for a rose livery. That is the advantage of the morning.) Many roses never did so well before. Even Pierre Notting has been a complete success (owing to transplanting and cutting down). The old favorites, Marie Baumann, Charles Lefebvre, Camille de Rohan, Captain Christy, have only surpassed themselves: they have not been surpassed. So of Etienne Levet, F. Michelon (who has, however, been better some years even than this), Countess of Oxford, etc. Lady Helen Stewart has been charming. The Baroness Rothschild, Mabel Mor-

rison and a White Baroness have been in great pomp; but I fear I have ceased to care for the whole lot.

Have you Prince de Portia?—oh, what perfection! And Mme. Victor Verdier, Ulrich Brünner, Antoine Ducher? But why go on? Most of all, have you Gloire de Margottin? rather new, semi-double, wholly poetic and divine. I should have been twice as happy to have had you with them. But I must gratefully own that my family have given me much satisfaction. I wish I could see yours. I don't believe that your gardener did any harm by cutting low: the new roses require this and often die unless they are brought pretty near to the ground. In the course of this wild fortnight I have sometimes nearly killed myself by fighting for these beauteous creatures, who have had all possible insect foes: but they have come through pretty well, and I am the better for it, though tired.

I have had an interesting little volume waiting to go to you for a week or more. The book will probably get away tomorrow. Short as it is, you may skip a bit here and there. You will find the man (it is a biography) very original and distinct, and there is a deeply interesting adventure. . . .

September 17, 1884.

I certainly should have acknowledged the gift with which you have so much honored me in terms

superficially different had we not heard this morning of Mrs. Valerio's death. Mr. Bellows once asked the Sedgwicks if I ever could be serious. That was some score and a half years ago. I regard your gift as a thing serious, and will not affect to believe that you will be unwilling to have me regard it as a seal of friendship. But I should have wreathed my thanks and my delight in some of my customary folly. Another death makes it hard to continue the cheerfulness, which was only an exterior before. But that is going beyond the mark, for your kindness, spiced with one violet's breath of affection, gave me a home-felt delight, made me really happier, and so far the cheerfulness was real.

I prize the picture very much. It is much nearer you than the one I spoke of yesterday is to the lovely object, but it is not so sweet or so animated as your face was yesterday, is today. What a lucky man I am to be winning a little more friendship of a kind which has not been so much my merit as my lot, at a time when I had thought the books were closed, and I must be content with those who are left and those who are beyond. Your love for one who is beyond is, I know, shown in your kindness to me. It was the depth and ardor of your affection for S—— that first made me wish to acquire something for myself, and we shall always have an entire sympathy there, the same loss, the same longing, the same gratefulness and hope. But

I need not talk any more. Continue to be gracious to me, prithee: it does me good and hurts you not. Accept my constant affection and homage for the rest of time.

Ever yours,

F. CHILD.

January 25, 1885.

He caste his eyen upon Emely a,
And therewithal he bleynte, and cryede, a!

Just so, dearest M., I know you are in New York from Theodora Sedgwick and I know that Boston was nearly the death of you. It was in vain for me to pretend to myself and to you that I was to see you there. There is a time mentioned in prophecy when another shall lay hands on them and take them whither they will not. That time arrived some year or two since, and has been very present the last two months. But what makes me look upon myself and curse my fate is that I did not at least get that half hour with you which I might have had on the way to Boston two weeks this day. I did not explain to you that I was ridden by an obligation to do something else. I was. But after all, this something did not get done, and all the night and the next day I beat my brows saying, what a balk! what a fool! what a discerner of times! That necessary thing, O shame, is not done yet!

If now I had followed nature, put my hat on, and not let you heroically go home alone, I should be richer by several recollections, which could console me for a neglected duty, whereas I have a double burden to bear. So it is with all those who fumble when they should act, and do not seize the butterfly on the wing.

M., who would have thought her a deceiver? When I look at this picture I say, that is healthy life itself, sweetness and strength blent in just the blissful mixture. But now I hear that a doctor has been called in, and that you are living on milk. I know it will be of no use for me to wring my hands. Why will you make this world more precarious than it is? I can tell you that I am counting upon your living, being well and being happy, and even upon a smile from you from time to time. I do not wish to live long enough to regret the loss of you, or your life of health and happiness.

Don't do whatever it is that brings a doctor to your door, for just a thousand sakes, a thousand and one, which is your step-step-uncle's peace. I can tell you again that it is a pleasant thought to me, when such are wanted, that you are bright and happy — a thought that cheers even the hours spent over college examinations, if it happens to come to me. But if it is an even chance that you have at that moment a doctor at your wrist, I might as well not have had the totally unexpected pleasure

of knowing you. Come now, *amitié oblige — tendresse oblige* — don't be the cruelest she alive. What is yours to bestow is not yours to squander. You are an estate encumbered with a hundred mortgages, and I hold a very small one.

24–25 *February*, 1885 (?).

The agitating intelligence about you had come in the morning through R—— to H——. Your own account, which differs not essentially, came in the evening, while I was engaged with my boy over Virgil, and no sooner was I done with him than I had a professor from New Zealand to entertain, who has now gone and leaves me on the ridge of midnight. . . . I scarcely know whether I am not contravening even the doctor in writing you even this little word, since you are ordered not to read. I am only writing a wine-whey or water-gruel letter, to be sure, or arrow-root or toast-water, whichever is weakest. Show it to your doctor, this letter, and ask him whether such things can harm. . . .

In that letter which I was looking to write, I was going to explain that I admire the photograph which I have, and should on no account forego it to have another in what I figuratively called a gingham gown. I expressed my whole mind when I said that I was a little afraid of you in so fine a dress. You cannot go to Cox; his sparkling gelatine is only too likely to be forced upon you, and a camera obscura

for a month together, but not his. I renounce the promised favor, at least until you are in perfect condition. I will have the rose in your cheek, the life in your eye. If you want to give me the second picture, as a special piece of flattery, you must first endure all the penances which are necessary to restore you to your best health.

Since receiving a photograph is not reading or writing, I will take measures to have some copy made. Only I am embarrassed as to which of the old ones to repeat. It must be some old thing, because I was more like myself formerly. But I well know that I have several which are very unlike, all of them, marred, I suppose, by photographic consciousness. It may be a paradox that a man who is self-conscious is not like himself. I use the words "photographic consciousness" to help the meaning. But, again, I am not sure that I should like to have you see me most like myself. I do not know when I am, either. But some of my selves I disapprove extremely. Perhaps even my ideals would not be worthy of a distinguished place in your collection, and I am sure that no photographer can produce them. Very distressing and futile, all this. If I only knew what you would least object to, I could try for that. I will send you something, and it may amuse you if nothing else. In my younger days I gave my ever-deplored dear Jane Norton a whole series of ludicrous portraits, which,

now that I have lost her, can make me smile no more. I will, if possible, avoid the ludicrous. . . .

Looking at your words once more, I, your confessor, must confess that the girls that love me are now too few to support a photographer. I am impelled to present the real state of the case under a parable. A man, being asked what his business was, said it was a good business, a very good business, only the demand was not always very steady: he smoked glasses for people who wanted to see an eclipse of the sun.

Even so,

Your loving

F. C.

(Father Confessor?)

I quite like the idea of a confessor confessing to his penitent and she saying nothing. Of a verity I think it was always so, that a man had more need of favor and absolution, to say I will be called a confessor because I make the shrift.

March 22, 1885.

I date your month of "Rest Cure" from the 23d, when you last favored me with a word. Great praise is due me for having not gone counter to the doctor in all that time. I suppose he did not intend to forbid my bearing you in mind always. I will plead to having offended in thought so far as to try to send you a photograph; but there I was

helped, or thwarted, by the photographer, who got ready another man's picture instead of mine; a better man no doubt—but will you not say with Prince Hal that you could have better spared a better man? This man was a distinguished German entomologist.

Today the photographer sends what comes with this ; a poor thing, but mine own. The Not-man does not I believe signify aught; no more does the bridal veil. A bull-dog expression in the jaw cannot possibly be intended.

I come to you, dearest M., through six mortal letters—one an apology; one, thanks and criticism to an Englishman, who wants to print all Shakspere's prose as verse; one to a professor in Louisiana, who wants to make a selection of English literature for a college library—all of these letters that are not letters. You see you have not been postponed to anything in the world, but writing to you is my reward for having done six things that I had long put off.

I may tell you before I forget it that I had a more characteristic picture than this once. Though you never might suspect it, my native temperament is gay and not morose, and I have one photograph, that is (was) cheerful. If you don't like this rather surly thing, I will have the other copied for you, but perhaps I had better show it to you first. This is, no doubt, making much ado about nothing.

Now, how are you? Are you convinced that you are, in a quite subsidiary way, but still of some importance to us while this vesture of decay doth grossly close us in, *mortal?* That you must be put on the regimen as to late hours and society? Pray tell me, doth not your physician say that you ought to pass your life with some stolid friend who loves you indeed, but would never stir your thoughts and emotions more than one inch below the surface? Because I know such a Kur, but I shall not tell where it is until the doctor speaks. Has he recommended you to go to New Zealand or to Morocco? That is their customary trick. Now, I, as doctor, should say go to Stockbridge with nice books and no cares, get a passion for plants and tend them, moderately, with your own hands. Can't you command such a passion? When I was considerably older than you (I was once so young, *et in Arcadia ego!*), I could scarcely sleep for love of plants.

I could consent to your going with me through all the windings of the Pyrenees, if I only could cut this world long enough for that! I want to drop Cambridge out of my thoughts this summer, but am more bound to it than ever. . . .

Having been shut up, you can't tell me why R—— and H—— do not write to me, haven't written to me. Are they determined that I shall have but one love at a time?

March seventeenth, you know, was an anniver-

sary. I did not mention it. I suppose my wife would not mention it to me; two years already.

You must not be away from Stockbridge this year when I go thither. I shall have but two weeks of freedom, and if I did not see you in that time, what would be the use? As I look out at the sky and ground, there is an almost imperceptible yellow striking through the sod, and a less harsh tone to the blue, so perhaps summer will come. No summer bird yet, no blackbird, no robin.

Good-bye, sweet M. It will do you no harm if you can really manage to love

Your affectionate

F. C.

Easter Sunday, 1885.

This was the day when you were to chip your shell or burst your cocoon. I was doubting whether it would be best to write you Friday and be present by letter, or to wait till today and be writing while the enfranchisement was going on. Circumstances decided. My snowdrops and squills are pushing their hands through in sympathy, and some of them are pushing their heads out, too. I fancy you more like the snowdrop than the squill—very white, head a little hanging, countenance very pleasant to look into when you can induce the snowdrop to turn your way. Now is the time for you to be in some sunny place where bulbs were planted last

year to greet you in April. They have not minded this grim season. Their fidelity is a perpetual marvel. I hid away a dozen little bulbs of Spring Beauty, had forgotten where they were, how many there were, and now the smallest of them seem to say, you were expecting us, of course. Before very long their sweet little flowers will be sprinkled about the little bed, three yards by one, mingling with the blue of the squills. I could be very happy doing nothing but looking at them and caring for them. But don't imagine that is the way my time goes — any more than in writing to you. I have a week of vacation from college, only to be more than ever occupied with other matters which college keeps under. . . .

We have been for two days adoring those red roses, such as you say have been filling your room. They were all that is noble and sweet, but not even for them would I lose my freedom. I fancy that more will wish to celebrate your recovery by roses than hastened to console your hours of debility. As I am present with you now, I see flowers everywhere. I can't hear, or no doubt I should hear *fleurettes* in plenty besides. It would be a good part of you to write me all that they said and sung with their flowers; or do they let flowers speak, and not attempt to meddle? When they are all gone, I should like to come in for a few minutes with you. But, alas, I have not been provident

enough to get my flowers ready. I never contend with the world about flowers, in these days when they are bought for ceremony. But were you hereabout the end of June we could try what we could do.

All of a sudden the glow is gone from the trees and grass seen from my window. What has come over you? It is no frown, I know. You have been called away to see somebody else. Well, farewell then. . . .

Every joy to you, a glowing cheek and a bright eye — and among those joys the recovery of those that sought again the Water of Life in Florida, where it is not.

Ever your very loving

F. C.

Sunday Morning, May 31, 1885.

But one word about roses. All the roses which you name are most desirable, and I have had them all but Magna Charta, Souvenir d'un Ami (Tea), and what thou callest Ayrshire (which, I suppose, are to cover up things with). Jacqueminot is one of the very hardiest and least fussy, and gives much pleasure ; albeit he does *not* give you to understand what poetry is, what heaven is, what woman is. Mme. Victor Verdier I have many of, and she is very lovely; so is her daughter Eugénie. Anna Diesbach is a noble character, very large, but small

are those hearts that do not take her in. Ellwanger's book and Ellwanger's catalogue give one the exact truth about roses, and there is nothing else so useful to Americans.

I spent half an hour of rain among my three hundred this morning, and if they were rapture to me yesterday, they were ecstasy today. You know that the rose foliage is an intense and very painful delight of itself and must be scanned and worshipped every day and, if possible, every few hours, before those signs of the curse pronounced on Eden begin to show. Though I have been humbly adoring for these three weeks, I have had my high festival today. The fine rain made everything grow surprisingly last night, and the green, all full of fire, the unmarred grace, with no suggestion of art or consciousness, are too much for words. Ah! what a world—with roses, sunrise and sunset, Shakespere, Beethoven, brooks, mountains, birds, maids, ballads—why can't it last, why can't everybody have a good share! I must indulge myself no more now.

F. C.

Wednesday Night, June 4, 1885.

Now mark what ills
  The rose's life assail,
Thrips, canker, slug,
  The mildew and the gale!

How came you by mildew on the very outset? Anything but that! I have been fearing that the

cold and dark weather would end so. My three hundred were this morning, most of them, in the most joyous health. If I saw the white plague-spot on one leaf, I should be plunged in despair. I hope with all my heart that you have no mildew. Aphis, if not excessive, is easily disposed of. No one must grow roses that has not a *passion* for them. Nothing else takes one through but passion. Such will say of the Rose as of Love, the grand passion I mean, that all other pleasures are not worth its pains. You evidently have this passion, but, my dear M., I am not writing to stimulate it but to beg you to control it. Your own bloom is of much more matter than the rose's. You cannot do such things as you describe in your note of yesterday without danger. Be persuaded; be controlled! If you admit me for a confessor, I will not, like an old Pope, say: "Daughter, pull up every one—just because you love them—to have unfading roses in heaven." But I shall be very unhappy if your new-found delight issues in a relapse. There is, between that bloom you would aspire to, that sweet aspect of roses, and your ruin, but one or two such field days as you describe. You must on all accounts not repeat it.

Tomorrow comes a great accession of occupation, and I shall not be able to repeat my ghostly counsels. Examinations will exact all my time, with printers; so I write tonight, while I can. I am very serious,

and trust that you will be so. I will not say to you of roses that all pleasures are not worth such pains. Shall they be as baneful as society? They were meant to delight and soothe you. If you go on as you have, I will pull up mine!

Your loving,

F. C.

June 20, 1885.

You write to one from whose lips the cup of bliss has ever been dashed at the moment when he could sip — and a chalice in which floated the fennel's bitter leaf regularly substituted; one born to be illuded and eluded in all things, even as in his simple confidence that roses at least would escape the common lot and be allowed to unfold all the charm which Nature endears them with only to balk them and me. I should say "us," but it is plain that Duty or some other baleful principle preserves you from that idolatry of them which has been the ruin of others. This you knew before. You know me as a man of a dark spirit, the mock of chance, all whose voyages end in shipwreck. The preface is therefore superfluous.

Instead of beginning with my logs today, I have begun with my letter, which will make the logs harder to carry, but will add to the discipline which is supposed to be the object of log-carrying. Trust no futures! including *futurs*. Make up your mind

that things will go badly, and when they do not, exult. This is the only philosophy.

You are in New York buying apparatus for the "Adirondacks"—a vague locality, but requiring everywhere, I believe, a special outfit. I have often been invited to go thither, but to me, that is my fancy, the name suggests only various miseries. I must be wrong since you and Miss L. deliberately choose it. Two maids setting forth for the wilds without any clownish fool to comfort their travel! Is one of you to suit her like a man? I misdoubt that things will not end so simply as they begin—some of the trees will be marred with carvings and perhaps even with verse. There are names composed wholly of straight letters that carve very well. Both names carve very well, and Lina is only short for ALIENA. All that is very easy. Knowing who 'LI'NA is, we infer mathematically many things about her comrade. It strikes me as I speculate, that ARDEN is short for ADIRONDACKS. I see how it will go. It is a hard matter for friends to meet, but mountains may be removed with earthquakes. But as for 'LI'NA I will not have such a thing happen as that a villainous Oliver should carry off almost the finest girl in nature. Rolands if you must, but no Olivers.

Meanwhile:

> Roughish country! but were 't hillier,
> Still would I track out Emilia.

Rivers, rills! but though 't were rillier,
Waterproofs would find Emilia.
Silly people! were they sillier,
I could stand them for Emilia.

The woodcut here reproduced was enclosed in this letter, and "marred" with verse by Professor Child

I gathered from a few words of L——'s that something was brewing. No matter. He that has passed his prime and will not rub off the buds of new affections can blame no one but himself for his plight. Go, maid, and be blessed. I am not the first, nor shall I perhaps be the last. As you kindly

tell me, I should not have seen so very much of you after all. Lenox is full of New York, and half of that New York would have been at your door. Show me the verses some day in 1890 if they don't happen to be the very ones which I have found on the oaks.

Ever your melancholy,

JAQUES.

Sunday, June 26, 1885.

Do you think it well for me to write to you while I am more dingy purple than Pierre Notting after he has been burning in three days' sun? Why, I hardly know, but the fluid that stagnates in me today is only to be compared to the lees of a sixty-year-old bottle of Madeira. Above these lees in the bottle I have in mind is a clear, fine, generous blood such as glows in Louis Van Houtte when the stars are kindly: but not one drop in me today, if ever. Much of this turbidness comes from seeing the short and perilous life of my roses. I cannot bear to witness the world's dealing with such perfection of beauty and nobleness. It is today quite too utterly crushing. I wish I had nothing but dahlias to look at. For the twentieth time I repent me that I ever lived to know what roses are. Everybody tells me that, though this is a bad year, my roses are supernal. I hear complaints from all quarters around me, and I have enough failures of my own. But it is not the failures that make my

mind so black : it is the successes ; it is seeing divinest beauty stricken with ugly decay only a few hours after it has reached its perfection. Well, let it go. I have been time's fool now twenty times.

I saw nothing peculiarly baleful in those leaves. No doubt your roses will conquer for themselves their half day of glory, by and by, and then perhaps you will be only the more melancholy. If those were Teas for which you were weeping, Teas are good for little the first year, but they ought not to be sickly. I tell you again, it is the thriving ones that pierce my heart and embitter my mind. Today I am nigh to wishing that the whole genus might disappear—*à la* Job. Yesterday I gave away eight or nine noble nosegays and supplied some thirty ragamuffin children besides. There was no end to the "Ohs!" My garden was as full as the sky with stars. You ought to have seen them. There is plenty left. I have cut but one bunch today and feel as if I never could cut another. I have had both single roses and bushes which surpassed belief. But it is enough to make a fellow cry and howl Avaunt! Come, Atropos, I say! Let us stay indoors, smoke cigars, read examination-books even, rather than look at a rose. I am longing for something perfectly dry—Old English grammar, that's my sort. Quaff quassia chips, rather than the ambrosial nectar : it will agree with me better in the end.

So you will not go to Arden tomorrow. I ought

to be sorry. I probably am sorry. I certainly am sorry for Aliena. But you will go later, and to my infinite amusement you essay to steal the clownish fool out of your father's court. Quite right. Orlando would come after, and the fool would say: This is the forest of Arden! When I was at home I was in a fitter place. No, you shall not take me as fool, nor shall you find me as Jaques, and it is too certain that I cannot happen to go, like Orlando. Do not let the question of my coming to the Duke's Court be a burden and an impediment to you. The last half of July is my opportunity, if that time suits ——. I am mad to take any vacation. I have an alarming piece of work hanging over my head, which must be done, and punctually, and here I am thinking of lounging for two weeks.

A storm is gathering which means devastation, more blackness within. If I shall have to perish, here is my chance. Let the rude scene end, and darkness be the burier of the dead! Why do I flinch? for flinch a little I do. Perhaps it will be as well if I let other people enjoy what just now gives me only pain. The children don't look at them as I do. I ought to make a vow not to pass by them, look out upon them, speak of them any more. I feel as though I should. But perhaps I shall not.

Now, was there ever a more absolutely unnecessary letter than this? Even those that have preceded it will seem to purpose by comparison. Yet

this letter reflects me quite fairly. What I need is work. Blessed pile of blue books, come. Potions of eysil 'gainst any strong infection.

Farewell, kind M., and converse with rational beings.

F. C.

Sunday, 5 P.M., *August* 23, 1885.

If I wait three weeks to answer your question, you will have had three weeks less reading of Shakspere, and I conceive that that would be a loss for ever. I should rather have that edition in forty volumes than in twenty. I have seen the one in twenty — what is the advantage of having two plays bound together? Rolfe's edition is not the best thing that can be imagined, but it is very good and also very handy. You could not possibly be better occupied than in reading fifteen of the plays over fifteen times consecutively and learning whole acts by heart. Those plays have enriched the world more than all books taken together. Who can spare Portia, Miranda, Helena, Desdemona, Cordelia, Viola, Rosalind, even though he has been so placed as to know L., M., R., S.? And what should those poor bodies do who have not known and never can know an L., an M., an R., an S.? How much we often would give to know intimately a sweet woman whom we see at a concert or meet in the street! and no one is cut off by fate from knowing

Portia except the few that are cut off from reading English. Those who have not the honor of visiting the Belmonts are welcome at Belmont. Perdita will give a flower to anyone that will come to her sheep-shearing. Not only do we get our ideals from Hermiones and Juliets and Celias, but we interpret our lovers and friends through them. They open our dull eyes — we men's — to nobleness, graces, and charms, which else we should have missed. This is very superfluous, truly, but is only an outburst of gratitude. . . .

I have done nothing this week but read old letters, tie up, burn. It has been a sad, sweet occupation. In that grate behind me, I have put hundreds of sheets that once lighted my eyes and thrilled my heart. The ashes would go into a tiny urn, and but little larger would be the urn that would hold the ashes of the writers. I have lived over again half my life — all of my life that is of any great account. I could not stop when once I had begun. I went through all — not reading all, of course — but inspecting all, reading much, recalling many who are dead, more than those that still live. I wish I could show you some specimens of the treasures which I have ransacked. . . .

Dearest M., wonder not that a seed grows, fire burns, water flows. I hope to live to love you more yet, though like one of "our dears," Cordelia, I love and be silent. . . . Tomorrow I must put my affec-

tions under lock and key and actually go to work. I have done next to nothing yet: think how shameful! I charge this remissness on weather and on my anniversary. I wish I could have such precious little letters as your latest ones — or any of yours, but it is only honest to admit that the latest are the best — have them every day and write as often: but what is this world we live in! I must *do* something. I have had enough to sweeten toil. . . .

I am glad you can think so kindly of me. It cheers me, it inspirits me. You know a part of what I think of you. Believe that I shall love you faithfully. . . . I will try to get another photograph which may please you better than the surly fellow. . . . Benedicta.

✠ Fr. Cist. ✠

October 25, 1885.

The sote smel that in myn herte I finde
Hath chaunged me al in another kynde.

So you were wearing out your eyes on that cushion, sewing o' nights like one who makes shirts for sixpence! I have taken, or tried to take, two sleeps on it, and I can declare that it is sovereign for all pains in the head, and that its power extends much farther and comforts the roots of the heart. What a sweet inspiration it was that led you to make that cushion. I delight in the odor above all things. I keep the cushion in a drawer with

my work. When I take out my work there comes a breath of M. I get handkerchiefs steeped with the fragrance. The old verses have a very good savor of their own, but you have now imparted a better. Altogether, with the stuff, and the balsam, and the thought and the work, and the motto, and the wishes, nothing could be more complete, dearest M., and if it were the fashion I would send you a kiss of grateful affection.

I have been having a bad enough head, beginning with a pain in the head and going on to neuralgia shooting like Northern Lights. Generally I have been decidedly down; but I have kept on working as well as I could (with dreadful low spirits, I will confess to this), and now my principal thought is that in two months I shall have to begin to lecture[1] — so *must* be ready. I shall hate giving them next to scrambling them up, but shall I not enjoy burning 'em a few weeks after beginning? The worst of it is that I do not think any other thoughts except of course little breathings of affection. I am a toad on a cold stone, but let me get through and never will I be so bored again.

It cheers me to think you are going to like Washington. . . . You understand the fine art of loving, or the art of fine loving, rather, is what Chaucer calls it. I see by the little gleams *I* get. You know

[1] Professor Child was preparing a series of twelve Lowell Institute Lectures on "Early English Poetry," to which there are allusions in letters that follow.

when to read a letter. You know everything that *I* know, and how much more perhaps. I really think you *could* teach my youngsters two or three things very desirable for them to know. I hope the bairns will have some such instruction in their day. Without it, what are the books, the schools, the academies? I have not forgotten the art entirely, though I have retired from the practice of my profession.

But now I am not talking like a Fra Cist. I must pull up my cowl. Here is a beautiful afternoon. Were I where you are (then should I be where I would be), I should throw up anything for a walk in the woods, if you could go with me. Well, dear and sweet M., even these months will go. I suppose you only jest when you speak of coming this way from Newport. You would not again be allowed to find the way to Boston alone.

Your grateful and loving ever,

✠ FRA. CIST. ✠

November 17 [1885].

I put no year, because this letter belongs a great way back, and a great way forwards; not quite back to the beginning, for it is absurd that I, so old, should be writing to you, so young, without my writing to the babe that could not read *my writing!* I go back to a time when you were able to make out what I say, even when I write in the dark.

Why should the eve of so happy a day be lowering, and the time only 4½? I have come in from roses, that would be proud to bear you a daily bunch next June, but now, when I crave their help, can do nothing. I have cut many of them up while transplanting and they beg me to let them sleep four months. It has all been done in stolen time. I could not let them go, that is my only apology.

It occurred to me when I came in that this day was almost gone, and that if I really meant to attend your levee I must be quick. And now I don't like to write to you *quick*. I had rather think about you a little first. Here is your picture, always by my right hand, though under cover. Chance visitors will not be allowed to look. Come now, where is my garland for you? You were born in November because there was nothing in nature to make that month tender and sweet. You have no rival. The month is yours. I confess I have always loved the earlier days of it, before nature has received her final stroke. I like to go about on fallen leaves and offer the waning world my reverent sympathy. But now there is not a leaf to fall; it would be a bare, gray, chilly northeast day but for the light that comes from you. Thank you, sweet M., for being born. You might have staid in Heaven and have left us to get on as we could. Thank you for resting at last on *my* horizon. I was becoming very poor, that had been rich, when sud-

denly a fortune was rained on my head. Shall I not have enough, if I keep you, to live on for the rest of the time? Or do you advise me to look elsewhere? As long as you have not given your heart completely away I will get, and keep, all I can of it. Why should I say "get," when all I get is of grace and not to be had in any other way? I must not get or earn, but accept. It is a pity that I should be in such a flurry at your feast, the sweet M.-Mass. I will not be again after this year; nothing shall drive or persuade me. I suppose there will be a throng; still at some moment of the day you will have time to run off with me just long enough for me to say that I love you, and more truly and fondly than ever.

✠ Fra. Cist. ✠

December 8, 1885.

Again it is too dark to look at a book and not quite dark enough to light a lamp, and being a little lazy from an unprovoked and untimely attack of rheumatism, I devise to write you one little sheet to justify myself for not writing more.

I cannot imagine how you live in Washington; but then I can't imagine, except in the most general way, how you live in New York. . . . But unless you give yourself up to society you would be out of place in Washington. . . . It must be that you are deep in society — where everybody whirls — and find music in its roar. I expect to see you so thin with

watching that for once you will be transparent. Six pairs of shoes a week danced out — weekly relays of toilettes from New York or Paris — breakfast at twelve, with a headache — a little tuned up by calls from the diplomatic corps at two — who find their match and a good deal more. Drive out — afternoon tea — dinner at eight — ball at eleven — coucher at three — lever at eleven. How is that for a sketch? Sketchy? I have left little intervals of silence during which you can confess or get your shrift ready. Let me see! What shall I tell my Padre? Was that very short flirtation bad enough, or would it not be trifling with the seriousness of his office to say anything about it? Decidedly it would. He will never expect me to tell him how late I stay out, and run myself down; or what people say to me — in confidence — at dinner. I shall only tell him that I love him, and then he will never think of being inquisitive.

Now as for your confessor. He thinks he has nearly come to the end of his twelve plagues. He *must* be there in three weeks from this evening, because then his lectures begin. He is as full of rheumatism in his feet at this moment as if he were all lead, and he goes to see an M.D. once a week, but is pretty well still. . . .

I remain ever thy tender, though severe,

✠ Fra. Cist. ✠

December 30, 1885.

Did you mean to ask me why I chose to be a Cistercian? Because the name begins with a C, and because the order used to be very ascetic, and because St. Bernard made it great, who exalted love above all things. I am missing my hours and neglecting my rosary. What is my rosary? A rosary of 400 beads, and each bead prompting thoughts of M. A rosary " gauded all with green," as Chaucer says.

You know, in part, why I have been so stupid, so blockish, so twaddling these last four months. I don't announce that all this is over, but the cause can no longer be pleaded. I have some six or seven hundred pages of bad writing, which I can stuff into 12 hours, as if they were so many sausages, and one of these sausages was doled out to the public last night. There were some 8 or 9 hundred people, and every one of them had enough. A miracle was operated in my favor, I don't know how it was. I have been doing the life of St. Margaret in stanzas of four lines, after this fashion : —

All ye that be in deadly sin and will with mercy meet,
Believe in Christ that gave you wit, your sins to expiate:
Listen and ye shall hear me tell with wordës fair and sweet
The life of a maiden men call St. Margarete.

Whether St. Margaret has ever known catarrh and sore throat, I know not: but all the same, I was looking to have a dry cracking throat, which

could set me coughing, and hardly speak a word all day; but all the hour of my lecture, I had no trouble, my eyes did not overflow with uncalled-for tears, and my throat did not tickle. Today I am as unconcerned as yon English sparrow that is eating bread I have thrown to him. The sky is bright and I am longing to be out, pruning my roses, but they must wait two months or more. I am in a humor to send bouquets of Catherine Mermets to all my audience! There were several old loves in it, besides my wife, but they did not come for love, but for instruction!

I did not send you anything for Christmas because I could not find or invent any thing fit. If I had had time, I should have invented something, but I was working away down in a coal-mine. Here is the last time for the year '85.

Adieu, with old love and new.

Tuesday Night, January 12, 1886.

Perhaps I am in time to take a look at you, my sweet M., before you go down to your carriage. It is not yet half past ten. I dismissed *my* carriage an hour ago; but who knows your hours? If I only had not slipped off my coat for something less formal I should be in proper dress to accompany you. I think a man who has this very evening been lecturing on British Poetry [has] a right to go to the British Embassy! But I am more pleased to

be *writing* to you in grand full dress. Sir Joshua Reynolds could not paint his best unless he was in his best trim, and the reason why I do not write you at least better letters may perhaps lie in my not feeling that I am presentable.

I don't think I will go to the Embassy with you. Runaway's eyes shall wink. I want you to have your share of flirtations uninspected. I am now so sure of your true affection that I can afford you some little variety, and even if I were present should not eye you askance. And you think that *I* have been having my own little indulgences, too. Nothing of the sort, my M. The old loves I spoke of were not objects of passion, but old friends. I had still more tonight, and lucky it was, for by persisting in dragging people through three or four nights of Anglo-Saxon I have reduced my numbers very much; but the quality has improved. Among those that I had a word with tonight were Fanny Morse and her sister Mary, Ida Higginson, Katherine Ireland. Miss Addie Bigelow was there, but I did not see her, and a good many nice people whom I should not know; but the number was small, and not merely because the night was very cold. Those who were there were impressed as I wished they should be.

I tell you again that M. knows the best of all sciences as well as any woman in or out of poetry. She is safe at any Embassy. By the way, I hope

the continental diplomats are a little more worth seeing than they were when I last saw them at Newport. I think you are going to have a happy week, and this I wish devotedly and devoutly. You might give my love to L—— an she pleases.

Ever thy tender loving

✠ Fr. C. ✠

February 6, 1886.

On consulting a certain calendar which is often consulted, I find January 12 and January 27 marked as red days and only January 12 as black: twenty-five days silence on my part. Ask the whole diplomatic corps, your intimate friends, whether that is not carrying discretion, obedience, and self-abnegation far—too far even for a Cistercian. But first indicate the answer which you expect, and let that answer be, beyond all measure too far. In public life they seek to baffle, in private life only to conciliate; and it is worth the diplomatic corps' while to conciliate *me*.

Had you come last night to the last lecture, I should not be sitting here today: I should be gliding over the snows with you by my side (should I, though?). You, to be sure, would have been frozen on your way, yesterday, for the thermometer kept an average just below zero. In consequence of the severe cold one of the most constant and lovely of young women was not there. I do not at the

moment mean *you* (in your case should I say *one of?*). A good many oldish ladies were old enough not to be hurt by a story of a princess accepting almost at the first word a Squire of Low Degree. I suspect there was a brilliant party somewhere besides Washington last night, for the lovely constant one referred to has minded neither cold nor wet.

Now I am done with lectures, M., I have all but forgotten what has been going on these six weeks — my dress coats, my heroines, my saints. I should have to make an effort to remember what I have been talking about. . . .

The most complete of things would have been for you to have finished your visit in Boston yesterday and me to take you to Stockbridge today. But why do I say such things while the Italian Minister and the Spanish are severally contending for your ear, the French for an appointment at tonight's ball, and an English attaché is just offering his arm for a promenade? Can I suppose that M. remembers the halls of L——, and what was done once between tea and talk? Was there ever anything so like Lorenzo and Jessica, and, alas, so unlike! Not even the comfort of ending "such a night" with "slander his love and she forgave it him." But this will not do, Father Francis. If you happen not to have your hair-shirt on, let me recommend you to don it. Of course I have worn

one full of knots all these six weeks, to remind me to what order I belong, though I read romances to lovely beings in the front row just under my desk. I don't suppose you know, but you may, one of the sweetest surprises in life—to find an old note, that is, a lost note, a forgotten note, in your pocket, or in a drawer, or in a box. Well—I can't say try, because you must not remember to forget. I have this moment something of the kind, only beyond comparisons: I have come upon a note of yours which I supposed had been sublimed to ether by passing through flame—your pillow note, so to call it. You could not write such a note in Washington; it must come from a woody place as well as from a fragrant season. It is most fortunate that I have kept it.

I hear that you have a grand dinner at your house every week. Still am I well. I think you go to two or three more. Yet I am well. I suppose there is something for every day. Well, well, and for every hour. What, no orisons, no shrift, no fast, and Lent so late this year? Daughter, this is perilous. But I must love you all through it. Returning were as dangerous as go o'er. *I* am called too, but only to a domestic lunch.

Farewell and benedicite.

Your loving

✠ Fra. Fr. Cist. ✠

Tuesday Morning, July 20, 1886.

CARA MIA PENITENTE (Expressly devised to match your beginning):—

What a clumsy thing a man is altogether, but most of all *unbeholfen,* as the airy German says when he writes a letter. This reflection is called forth by the reading of your light-touched sketch of the dinner. Men are all Germans: it is of no use to make distinctions among the flat-footed, heavy-fisted creatures. There is a *Breton bretonnant,* and a *Breton pas bretonnant,* but a man is *a man* for a' that. Well may you say that you expect a *fat* letter from one of them.

It was expressly stipulated between me and myself that at any time this summer I might put aside proof and copy whenever a girl — (named M.) — wrote me a letter, whether it required an answer without a minute's delay or not. I mean to neglect such things wantonly and peremptorily, and I won't be called to account, whenever the occasion alluded to occurs — and you know exactly how often that is likely to be. If I do not resent that particular roll which lies at my left hand, it is because I regard it as beneath notice. Want to be corrected, do you? Why don't you come in a shape that admits of no betterment, like the square little proofs at my right hand? "Proofs" — but I am not going to write passages, and quibbles and quabbles, and quibble and squabble about what the little square

sheets precisely prove. This letter is purely unnecessary after the one which crossed yours, and should therefore be filled with nothing but froth. "Menti plusieurs fois," after "I miss you very much!" Come, come, "riddling confession finds but riddling shrift." "I am not so much your M. as I have pretended plusieurs fois, but still yours more than anybody's M."

Yes, I know about ——, but who are the rest of them? It is not confession to say I have been telling you fibs; the fibs must be particularized. I am not of that suspicious kind who can supply particulars from their own jealousies, although I may be now and then incredulous. I know very well that all trivial fond records are to be wiped from the tablets of your memory as soon as fate is fulfilled, but how about the interim? What does it mean to be in one's den, "consoled by a faithful cigar"? So many daggers in these innocent little sheets. Nay, not so much; not there. Consolation from a cigar? A cigar does well for a jaded man, but what would you think of a man who, missing his love (supposing a case), should take to a cigar? or perhaps a bottle? Misericordia! I have a great mind to turn one of your relations — to be your brother-in-law — poor L——! — and, excuse me, A——, for a month, or two months — till work begins. I *am* a relation, after a sort, already. Misericordia di me: how glad I am that I never thought

of that before. But if you talk of dens where men console themselves with cigars you will drive me into making the very uttermost of the connection.

Now, my poor dearest, hard-driven M., much-relationed member of society, member of societies, is this the way in which your confessor and consoler confesses you? No, it is not the confessor who says the last words. He has no earthly ties; he has forsworn them for the very purpose of qualifying himself. I fear sometimes that you will wear the frame of your intense soul so thin that he that runs may read your heart. . . .

A wretch rings my bell twice. I have been fearing invaders since Thursday last, but none of a bad kind have come. Why is not this you? The den is so nice a place for a talk, dusty as it is. Another mercy, some woman to see my aunt. Explain your *menteries*. I cannot have you hauled about by a burning chain. *Without* fibs I am still "yours more than anybody's"

✠ Fra. Fra. ✠

P.S.—Just this minute a letter from a very accomplished man in German recalls me to ballads. But why not? Should I be writing to any other girl?

September 17, 1886.

All the long time since I last wrote to you has been a blank as far as any interesting thing goes.

I should be quite ashamed to tell you how little progress I have made. If I could score a good deal as *done* I would not say anything of other lacks. Days seem to be of depreciated value, so little do they fetch. I put off all I can in hot weather, but what shall I do when I am congealed — as I sit at my desk and still don't get on? Even glaciers are known to make progress, and icebergs still more. To be sure, I had to go to Newport to see a friend who is not well, but that took only two days — yes, and ruined one before and one after. To be sure, I expected a visit from a young Englishman who did n't come, with all my telegraphing and writing. To be sure, my family came home and some little regard was due them, but they always allow me the day-time, and I do not work in the night till the sun sets before six. Altogether I am as inexcusable — as — as — as if I had stayed in Stockbridge or gone with you wherever you went. Could I say worse of myself?

But where did you go and where are you now? Am I writing to a Canadian or an American? Lucky that you do not know what a dull and doleful fellow is writing to you. I shall have to stop writing lest you should discover me! People can be discovered without writing. If anybody desires to discover how tedious I can be, correspondence is solicited! I sometimes think that I should not be quite so leaden were only my task reeling off, but I

am not sure. Be prepared for the worst, dearest M.

At Newport I saw sea and houses — few people. I rang your Uncle ——'s bell and saw him. I had some sensation of your having been about, and looked round the garden wistfully. All the time I was weary and preoccupied. We used to have a French maid who asked my wife once whether rope-dancers required to have their legs broken when they were children. She had heard so. When asked why this should be, she said, "It would perhaps make them more dégagé!" Come now and break my head and see whether the operation will affect me favorably.

I do not think I should select this day and hour to write to you. I dare say if I did n't remember having written to you on the 17th of September before, you told me. This 17th is not like that 17th. I dare say I wrote you a gayer letter. But now I am your friend forever, forever both ways, *n'est ce-pas!* For when one loves, one thinks there never was a time when one did n't. That is a great mystery. I must have loved you then in '80—'75—'70—'65. Must I not? If I had time I would try to detect that thread in my existence all these years back. . . .

Thursday, October 7, 1886.

Here you have your little book, and I suppose it never would have been reprinted but for you.

The opening verses I should have left out if I could, both because they are rather too private for a book[1] which was to have a third edition, and because they are not good verses; but they were very deeply felt when they were put in. For the selections I took only such verses as utter real feelings and have been felt over again by me. Many of the pieces were twisted in with my very fibres; some of them are for moods, but few. You will keep this little book till long after I have vanished. All the essential things I have believed, and believe still, and some of the aspirings have been mine. So far it may rightly recall me, and a little further as coming from one who loves you and honors you, and has laughed a good deal with you but many times also cried with you. But I need not explain myself to you, dearest M., or invoke your faith or generous remembrance. Being what you are, you will remember. Thank you from the next century.

Your faithful

FRA FRA.

Wednesday, November 10, 1886.

This may be called the first leisure moment (3½ P.M.) since Tuesday the 2nd, when I began the campaign[2] by going to a large dinner party in honor of Dr. Creighton of Emmanuel College, and did

[1] An anthology, *Poems of Religious Sorrow, Comfort, Counsel, and Aspiration*, made by Professor Child and first published in 1863.

[2] This passage and a portion of the following letter have their background of fact in the ceremonies attending the celebration of the 250th anniversary of Harvard College in November, 1886.

n't sleep a comfortable wink after it: it seems to me that I have not slept since, till last night. . . . Tonight it will be proper to go to a lecture by Dr. Creighton, after which I may return to my usual style of life. I have had much less to do than most of my colleagues — two large dinners to go to, one lunch to give. I have had James Lowell a good deal to myself or shared him with only a few, and that has alleviated the tedious pleasures of the period. One evening I was with J. L., Godkin, G. Curtis, Howells, Creighton, and Norton — a bright lot of men certainly! . . . Monday was a very brilliant day. Tuesday was an interesting day, and we had a lovely concert besides, but it was all fatiguing. Several times I thought I would interpose a little ease by writing to my M., then somebody would come in, such as an old classmate, and the letter had to be abandoned. . . .

Saturday Night, November 14, 1886.
11 o'clock.

. . . The first very bright spot that attracts my eyes is your visit to Boston. All this, while I ought to be celebrating your month, celebrating her who, to make the world more festive, was born every day of November. What shall I do about it? There are no roses. How wonderful that in the very month when there are no roses M. should be sent for recompense. Not so bad a world. I am already quite aching to see them again. . . .

This week I have been as earthly as any pagan African. The publicity wearies me, much as I shunned it, and I dŏn't remember — or scarcely — having had a thought about the mud. The coming week I must get to morning prayers and hear the choir of little boys chant their anthems, and try to keep my head and heart higher. But the week ends with a loving thought of M., and that is as good as the boys' chanting. Benedictus benedicat! To New York quick. I love you always tenderestly.

✠ FRA. FRA. ✠

Oho! P.S. — That dinner with all those men was dull. . . . They were matched with mere children — good children, but children still. It is not that I prefer men's dinners. Heaven forbid! Could we have had M. placed between James Lowell and *any*body, not too far for me to see her — L—— next to Godkin — L—— next to Creighton — Mrs. Whitman next to — *Curtis* — that would have been an occasion for 250 years. (I was next to Mrs. Creighton.) I see that you thought because I was brought up with eleven other Cistercians I preferred men. My rule forbids me to associate ordinarily with women. I have a dispensation because I have made my jubilee, have been fifty years a brother. But I do not prefer men's society. I find a club tiresome if I go often, and do not go at all. Now, if I could come to dine with you tomorrow, on two smoked herrings, what a feast it would be!

Never suspect me of being a mannish man, liking men's unmixed company. I don't insist even on having the brightest of women *always*. I like good women, sweet women, natural women — they need not always be as vivacious as our L——, or as ? or ?

Sunday Afternoon, January 16, 1887.

Of course your faith has gone to bits, for it is a fortnight and a day since I wrote you a word. A very blank fortnight it has been, filled up with work on ballads, continued often till midnight. I have had another panic about not living to see the end of the thing, and have been like the hermit in the desert who is running from death. The only way to get on is to work doggedly through dull and pleasant alike, and just now the work is dull. Then I have had rheumatism of a most pervasive description — such ankles to walk with! But I have not walked further than the college. Why should I tell you of work and rheum?

And so, since I see nobody, or only students and my household, and go nowhere, and hear comfortable reports about your family, and do not fear that you will throw me over — I keep on doggedly, as I said, looking forward to your possible appearance next month, to pruning of roses in March, to seeing the first renewal of nature shortly after, and say nothing. At times a longing for spring is very

keen. At times the soft clouds, for it has been a beautiful winter, cheat me into a thought that it may be coming, or perhaps you may be coming. *Your* roses, too, are pleasant to think of, and the more work I do now, the more time I can steal by and by without desperate remorse. For all the time I devote to love and roses now (such a pinny pen this is) *is* stolen. When I was young I never hesitated to give all the hours which the college did not directly claim to flowers and maids. I ought to have had you then, only I should not have had you now. Then I would write two letters a day about nothing—to one maid, I mean—or even to a man, for I felt that ages were before me. Now I am cabined, cribbed, confined, bound down to saucy doubts and fears. I don't want to say what my thoughts are, and if I see nobody and nobody writes to me, except to beg, or to answer literary questions, or ask them, I am no better than a hermit. . . . A hermit could only tell you of lives of saints and preach austerities. I have no austerities to recommend to my M., and prize her at a higher rate than any of the saints in the Legend. . . .

I wish we could live a thousand years on this pleasant earth, under this bright sky, being happy or growing happier always. Why not a thousand here, if forever elsewhere? But the question is irreverent and even flippant. Too many find seventy, fifty, thirty years too much. Only may we have

love where we go. Ever, dearest maid, thy dear loving

✠ Fka. Fra. ✠
(Dark)

Thursday, April, 1887.

I assure you that the gap seemed a broad one to me, my own dear M., and when your little note came this morning I should have felt like a malefactor (who, however, if he is a big one rarely feels at all—let us say, as a reprobate ought to feel) had I not known that your letter had been anticipated or crossed. I told you in my last that I was perfectly well: that means for me no gout or rheumatism, but ought to mean that the desire for study was keen, and that I was looking very sharp after my M., and acting like my natural self. I am quite cheerful though work drags; blessed be hope, it must be the hope, of seeing my dear fellow-creatures in the garden arrive. They have pushed up their green heads before this, generally always, but hold back this April as if they were afraid. Could I have arranged this Easter holiday as I would, I should have pruned roses with you in your garden; mine are almost all pretty well cut in, and I have some thorns in my fingers to show for it. It would have been such a delight to go over your garden with you and prophesy all the pleasure that you were to have from this and that. . . .

All this about myself to clear the way to you. You are almost alone, and have sorrows of various kinds about you, and are working hard, with no trees to turn to, and parting with things that you have grown up with. If a Fra Fra did not try to cheer you he would deserve to be walled up, or disfrocked, excommunicated, and handed over to the temporal arm. But what in the world can a Fra Fra do for a M.? Preach to her? Nay, sing a Mass for her? That would be something. He ought to come to her, though he might catch her for once in a déshabille (elegant, of course), devised in Paris expressly for *déménagements* and *démantèlements*, with a divine brush for a fan, exquisitely wrought keys hung to a fascinating belt, *and* such a cap! Do go straight to Kurz after one of your dustiest experiences and let me see the real and practical woman, which is one part of your many-sided personality. Still to be neat, still to be drest as always waiting for a guest, and never have no second best! Let's see you in a fresh French print, made for a dust, [?] no train ahint, and we will say there's something in't. Well, no doubt the only reason Fra Fra doesn't see M. in her enchanting duster is because he doesn't put himself in a condition so to do; but should you broom him out if he came? . . .

After tea I am to read "Quentin Durward" to my household; that is an appointment for every evening. I should like to look in on M., after she

has doffed her duster (that is not the name for the costume, but I have not Worth's circular to consult) when I have finished my reading and have a little outpouring. How long must this last? Why stay till May? Why not have all done in a week more and fly to the country? Foolish questions since M. has always named May as the earliest date. Dearest M., you shall not be forgotten till May anyway. I kiss the tips of your fingers — that is of the *déménagement* gauntlets.

Farewell for a little while. . . .

Your ever most affectionate

✠ Fra. Fra. ✠

Tuesday, 5 *April*, 1887.

I wonder whether there is time to write you five words before tea? I have been out pruning roses until near sundown, though I had to stand in snow or mud to do it, and have come in with a predestinate scratched face. I cannot say who did it — La Baronne Prévost is too old a friend with all her stout thorns. And of course I have lacerated roses and thorns in my finger-ends. In all of which I delight. But it is a very harsh April and not a perceptible tint in the grass. All the morning I was housed and at work over books. I earned my little *délassement* with the roses. They bring me close to you, of course, though yours must wait a fortnight longer than mine, I suppose.

I begin a week's vacation tomorrow. Why do I

not go to 220 and help your clearing? I am as much afraid to steal from my tasks as if I were Epictetus or any other clerkly slave. It has been wearisome to me; so many times writing to England to get things right which are in themselves of the least utterable consequence. The other day, after waiting two months for some copies, I had a grand flare-up of Diamond matches on my table, which ended by burning up some of the stuff just received and a rarish book to boot, and the next day I found that the copying done in Oxford was much of it in vain, and had to write off for something else. This kind of delay has happened half a dozen times or more during these three months, and therefore I am weary of such a dragging business. But when squills and crocuses (not circuses, though I dote on them and they are spring pleasures) and Spring Beauty come (snow-drops have been trying to open for a fortnight), I expect to cast my slough like other reptiles and to snap my fingers at books.

You gave me the best of reasons for all you were doing—and not doing—and you hit the fact exactly when you said, Tell me how you are, that is, how near is spring with you. I am entirely well.

I ought to tell you how I went to breakfast with J. Lowell the other day and was persuaded by him to stay till 12.30, and then went out to dine with

him and George Curtis the same day!—and I had been out to dine once before that week!! Don't you think I might be made Assistant Secretary of the Treasury after that, *vice* F. Child promoted? Surely they want somebody to go to Cabinet dinners. Or does the Secretary attend to the dinners and the Assistant Secretary to the work? . . .

I don't call this a letter. Tea was imminent when I began and I have felt as if writing a postal card. But I can write again as soon as the sun has cleared the remaining ice from my heart and the north side of my hedge.

Farewell for a trice.

Your ✠ FRA. FRA. ✠

Sunday Afternoon, April 24, 1887.

. . . What are you doing this celestial day? How sad that you should be in a great city when the birds and green grass and springing plants are calling you to a walk towards and in our wood—our pleasance we will call it since it is so small. I wish Cambridge were the natural halt between you and Washington. In fact I am in a mood for nothing else but such a walk. Books (save one) are repulsive to me. I drop my work any half an hour to go out and see if another adonis is springing or a meadow rue showing its claret-colored head. So false are fables : *la cigale ayant chanté tout l'été,* etc. One should work all winter to be ready to

sing all summer, and sing all summer to be able to work the winter through. One or the other one must do, sing or work. I find that I cannot work if I go out under the pretence of just looking at this or that, and I hoped for a rain yesterday (not very earnestly) to keep me indoors. This proves that it is the order of nature that there should be a set of toilers and a set of butterflies. The butterflies are not to be moralized; a butterfly cannot work without ceasing to be itself. Whatever is, is right. I do not belong to the butterflies, though "*zwei Seelen wohnen ach! in dieser Brust.*"

I ought not to go into the garden again for a month. But I saw a dandelion today; that pleasure cannot be taken from me. . . .

How came you to have time to make me my book-cover, which will make me read Daudet? I never saw or dreamed of a thing so sumptuous before. It must have been so that Rebecca of York read romances (if she ever read anything but the Talmud and medical books). To me it savors altogether of the Orient. My idea is, to recline on my silken aromatic pillow and be found reading your volume when company is expected. I have had William and Sara Darwin to dinner today and lost an opportunity. I am too much impromptu, I ought to live with more prevision and art. *Nessun maggior piacer che il possedere cosa fabbricata da mano diletta;* see Dante. I am always

charmed when my M. shows her skill with the needle, because that is a womanly grace. . . .

I wish I had something entertaining to communicate. But I see almost nobody. If you were here I could show you a letter from a lady by the title and name of the Countess Evelina Martinengo-Cesaresco, which came this morning. She is mad about popular ballads, like your F. F. That 's the occasion. She sent me a book of her father's — and who is her father? Why, an English dean, though she lives on the Lago di Garda. I have nothing to send her but "The Child of Bristow" — everlasting thing. She writes very prettily about delicate tastes "which constitute a little religion of which the essence is rather inclusive than proselytizing" — meaning just now love of popular poetry. Love of roses is another religion — she does n't say that she professes that. Do you mean to be shut out of the other superstitions? I have very few: love of women, roses (including apple-blossoms), popular poetry, Shakspere, my friends, wild flowers, trees, violin music, *voila!* I cannot have the Countess shutting you out from anything that I like, though I dare say you like things which I do not care for, but of the second grade. It is only important (if possible) that we should agree in our highest tastes. You have a taste for women, roses, apple-blossoms, etc. Perhaps you have a taste for china. I have not. Set that off against cigars. . . .

Sunday Afternoon, 28 August, 1887.

. . . Yesterday I had an application from the Editor of the *Fortnightly Review* to furnish him (as a lot of folks have been doing) "with the passage in all poetry which seems to him the finest, and also the one passage in prose which seems best." He means to make an anthology of such things. Why does n't he ask me (of the poetry) which rose is best? Which thing in M. is best? I don't think I shall undertake to answer so very foolish a question; but I am told that many people in England have—your Matthew perhaps. Do you want to answer for me—that is, what *I* think best?

Then I am glad to hear that you are really well and much amused to hear that you are aging (or age-ing). Why not overtake me? I would go on as slowly as I could. . . .

Friday, 2 December, 1887.

While you were here Sunday it seemed quite imperative that I should write you that very day, to tell you how much improved Cambridge was; but I reflected that you were to be gone from Garden Street all day long, so that I could not use those most necessary words till toward evening. But it was my weird, my fate, to have five people to dine, and after that, with a short break, company till 10 o'clock, and not even a little note went to you, either to Garden Street or to Orange, which afterwards

seemed to me better, because I should be welcoming you home. And yet people wonder that I do not like the flux of company!

I watched over you, and felt pretty sure that you would be happy when the sun came out bright. I hope you went home refreshed enough to repay you for five hundred miles travelled. My week was very much happier. I stormed a little just while I was dressing to go to Boston to dine on Monday: that was a very different thing from half an hour's talk and ten minutes walk with M. But when I was once in the pretty house and saw Dr. Holmes and only three other guests besides us, I immediately became so serene an impostor that my wife held up her hands. The doctor and I sat together, and I could see that he was glad to see me again. He said that he did not meet "men of books" very much of late, and he liked to talk about this poet and that. A dinner-party for six or seven (the hosts being in formal mourning, which keeps the tone agreeably low, and the movement *allegro, ma non troppo*) would certainly be a good thing twice a week were I sufficiently civilized, and I think I could submit to be civilized enough if I could go without heart-eating cares. Why, I certainly behaved myself as though there were no such thing as either behavior or cares for two hours and forty-five minutes. But I should have to be a *little* more civilized: a properly civilized person can go to sleep

on coming home, but I had to sit up till 1 to get myself sleepy enough. And this without the slightest excitement. Think what it would have been if I had met my M. for the first, second, third or fourth time. Think what it used to be when I was a youngling and met a nice girl at a modest Cambridge party! I met nobody that I had not met before, and a veteran author, though most agreeable company (for the Doctor is thoroughly amiable) would not rob me of the hour from 12 to 1. But I would take a watching till 3 (which used to be my way) if I could be young enough to be asked to meet Miss ——. . . .

CAMBRIDGE, *Saturday, December* 10, 1887.

Ought I to be writing to you in German? Perhaps you think only in German now, for I can see that you will be very intense about it. But German is no language to write anything in but Wissenschaft, and at this moment I am not writing Wissenschaft. . . .

We are threatened with the loss of our Dr. Asa Gray,[1] a man universally liked and the most distinguished man that we now have here. He had a stroke of paralysis, while in full health, and after a delightful summer in Europe. We were told again and again that there was no hope, but yes-

[1] Fisher Professor of Natural History in Harvard College, who died January 30, 1888.

terday the report changed and it was said that he might still have several years of comfortable life. He is 78 and has been very happy. He could not wish to live on with any impairment of his faculties. My hopes for him will turn upon that issue.

Dr. Gray was a much-esteemed friend of Charles Darwin's : I did not know how much till I began to read the new Life (which William Darwin kindly sent me). You must borrow the first volume and read the two chapters of personal history, an autobi., the others by Frank Darwin. His life is quite unique for modern times. But a three-volume book, mostly scientific, is not to be rashly bought. When Charles said to his brother (I think), "You must read my 'Descent,'" it was answered, "Read it? I had almost as lief buy it." And you may say, "Buy it? I could almost as soon read it." Darwin is in good print, and I dropped for it Mrs. Gaskell's "Wives and Daughters," in very bad print, which made my good eyes smart. I find myself quite of Mr. C. D.'s mind about novels, only I could not read mediocre ones : namely, that novels must end happily, and have one character that one can admire, by preference a pretty woman. In "Wives and Daughters" there are two girls, not quite old enough for one to care passionately for, . . . but I like them both and have forgotten troubles over them. Though Darwin had so enviable a life in many respects (bating forty years

of invalidism or not) his exclusive devotion to one line of thought destroyed his sensibility to poetry; he was so far paralyzed. We cannot afford to have many such great men, loving and lovable as he was. When the charm of poetry goes, it seems to me best not to stay. If the world is nothing but Biology and Geology, let 's get quickly to some place which *is* more than that. What place? Why, Orange, Stockbridge, Cambridge even. But I ought not to say that C. D.'s world was all Biology and Geology, for the affections were still half his world. I do not find that he had any M. to write letters to, and I notice the same want in many biographies. This is a sad defect. Perhaps I ought to begin an autobiography to show what great gaps there have been in such lives. And people will say — All chaff, my dear, his autobiography, except that, strange to say, he was on really intimate terms, quite intimate with one of the ——*est* girls, hidden under the name of M., etc., etc.

Now for my postman.

Benedicite. Your most loving

✠ FRA. FRA. ✠

Saturday Afternoon, 11 *February,* 1888.

If I have not written to you until this last day of the week, you know of course that I did not wish to share you with Wagner. How much is left of you after the trilogy? If now you want to get the sound of his everlasting recitation out of your ears,

come on here the 21st and go to hear Cherubini's Requiem Mass in the Cathedral. That would be something that you could never forget, whereas Wagner is something which you could never remember. It is a wonder to me that the singers can retain the music. I think they are prompted every bar or two, but no more about that. I will let Wagner alone since he lets me alone. The Cherubini Mass will take you out of and above the confusion, which you have been immersed in. Do you think that a Cistercian brother could smile on such pagan music? Better look out for a good penance when you go to confession. Telling me that you are going is not confession, neither is telling me that you were there, in a cursory way. Well, you were not at the ——, as I supposed yesterday. I was not at a dinner given by the Tavern Club to George Curtis, though a seat was reserved for me. G. C. and James Lowell have been here three days. Not a few long sessions have I had with J. L. who was in the next house, and one with him and G. C. And one evening I dined with Lowell over the way in a simple fashion, *en frac,* but not *grande toilette,* because there was a party before him which I had declined in abstinence of mind, most easy to practise.

I have had a good week. It is a lovely snowy day, just the day to walk with you and verify your photograph, but, poor thing, how could you walk after

three operas in a week and those Wagner's? . . .

Spring is here upon us. I suppose there may be primroses out in England by this time.

Praying that my M. may be well, and loving her through all the Trilogy and heathenry, I am her loving

✠ Fra Fra. ✠

February, '88. Friday Afternoon.

Nay, nay, my very giddy M., do not ask me to go to the trilogy—Nibelungen, *nie gelungen!* Ask me to go to La Somnambula when I can look into your eyes and say, *ai miei sensi io credo appena, tu m'assicuri!* and we can both cry at *non pensiero.* I am lost in admiration of your energy, however, dear creature. I know all about the twilight of the gods: setting it to music is above Wagner. It is when I walk through the grove with you from L—— to I——, nothing murky and uncanny. And there is a noon-tide of the gods: when you have told me that you are coming up to L——. . . . I do not require Wagner. He may be very well—*il cor ché audito di esca d'a-m-e, di esca migliore bisogna non ha—bisogna non ha—b-i-s-o-g-n-a NON HA!* Or again, I would go with you to a Pontifical Mass at St. Peter's (as a friend wrote me she did at the jubilee. Baron Schönberg got her a place, and he would have got places for us), driving to the church by moonlight, at 6 in the morning—the church all

dark for some time — and the daylight approaching gradually, and a burst of golden rays lighting up the Holy Father at the altar. That would be a delight, to the taste of both of us. (Would they let us sit together at St. P.'s?) You are a regular worldling, but you have a deep heart and a tender. You would after all like the mass, like such gotterdämmerungen better than the opera. . . .

Your letter came on my birthday; no letter of yours ever came on that day before. It had the effect of making me not a year older, which is not necessary, though discretion be a plant of slow growth, but say, five years younger. Much love was shown me that day. The dearest old friend, to whom I owe at least as much as to any man living,— 80 years old,— came to see me, and put out his cheek to be kissed — well, not exactly like a girl. . . . He staid an hour with me and left me almost happy. I was very grateful when I went to bed — and before. Roses and violets are still perfuming and glorifying this den, and out of doors the sky is as beautiful as summer. The trees are all sunny a-top, and seem to be budding. Your little flower is in my left pocket — yes, *there* it is. I may be excused for looking at it, notwithstanding this new stone on my cairn, for yesterday (rheumatic as Nebuchadnezzar), while I was in the library, a graduate of thirty-seven years ago hailed me with "Why, you don't look a year older than ——!" This

happens, or has happened to me, and I used once to be flattered; but now I have to say,—within, it is not quite so. My trouble is that I do not feel younger than I look, and it is not so pleasant to look (if I do) younger than I feel. But I avail myself of my friends' want of insight to write a very young letter to you. For what does it matter? . . .

I will take these frivolous pages right to the letter-box that they may reach you on Saturday. . . .

Your far from stern

✠ Fra Fra. ✠ Cisterciensis.

April 12, 1888.

. . . I am writing to express my pleasure at the pleasure in prospect for you. At first I thought you were about to say that you would sail for Europe with J[ames] R[ussell] L[owell] on Saturday the 21st, which I think is his day. But it is better that you are to dine with him on the 14th. I am divided in my mind whether to wish to be there or not. First, I wish you to sit next to J. L.—or to put things right,—men always in their inferiority,—that he may sit next to *you;* in fact, have the honor of taking you in. But, oh, Lord, that cannot be! I have forgotten the hostess. What a confusion am I capable of making in the best established conventions when a dinner takes me. No matter, I wish that J. L. may not be tired, and may be more cheerful than he was when last here. Secondly, you

know it has been a wish of mine to see how you appear at a fashionable dinner (this will be such, I hope?) when no such folk as confessors are by. That is a reason for my not being a guest. But could I not offer myself as a waiter? Perhaps I should not make a handy waiter, but at least I would not spill anything on your gown. I should even like to see your best gown, or one of them. And will you not need to have me take you back to Orange, about 11 P.M.? since it is of a Saturday, your dinner. Well, dear, remember all the nice things which you say and tell me of them. I consider my M. good company for any poet any day, so she need not make the least effort, and I don't think she would; it is enough for her to speak right on. But if she has a way with fashionable people (J. L. is not fashionable people), a New York way different from her Stockbridge way,—then I am sure it will be charming. I want to know exactly what it is. I don't know whether I have more than one way or not. I have often suspected that I had, that I should talk differently in different societies. But why am I bringing myself in? After all, I think the principal difference is that I should sometimes be only duller or silenter than at others. . . .

By yesterday's newspaper I perceive that *our* Matthew Arnold has been writing about Americans in the *Nineteenth Century*. It is good for him that he perceived the charm of American women; had

he failed there I should have had to give M. A. up. He may think as he will of our institutions, our newspapers, our climate, our men ; but if he were blind to our women's loveliness I should distrust his taste in everything. Of course he would practise reserve on this subject. . . . He recognizes what I always thought must be the damper and the crusher for English women: their consciousness of a stratum above them. (Grace Norton told me of an American woman who wanted a window opened in a hot room; her English friend said, You forget that the Countess —— is present, and that no one would venture to express such a wish but her!!) I must look up Matthew and see what trace of you I find in his article. . . .

June 13, 1888. [?]

. . . What a tale you tell! I myself have been very unhappy because a part of my roses have done badly, but I have many buds, and today they are out, I may say, by thousands. I have not had time to attend to them properly, and worse still have not had legs. My printers are on my heels, and rheumatism has been in my knees. Insects are not very bad here, though worse than anywhere out of Massachusetts. The cold weather has been unfavorable, and some which have always done well by me have been blighted dreadfully. I have asked my dear little Hoopers to come and see them this

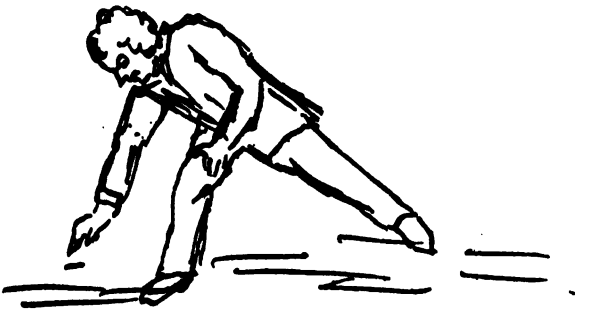
afternoon, and have promised roses to all my paddies who will line my fence, in two or three or four or five relays, because there are so many roses that it is wicked not to give them to the youngsters. But I do not know how to get the time. Oh! that you could but look in!

After many years' experience I think there is nothing more perfect than Marie Baumann. François Michelon is not going to do well; he pines like a delicate girl. *He!* It should be Françoise.

I am just now kept with very sharp nerves by the necessity of printing up my book which ought to be done leisurely. I have the literature of the past two or three years to run through, but must print very soon, and a German who is to help me with Slavic things does not write what he will do.

Indeed, I wish I were with you and sweet J—— (to whom my duties flavored with sweet affection): —my love to Vladimir.[1] I have long felt as if the other horse had kicked my knees; but I could go on them now these last two days if the adequate occasion came up. What is an adequate occasion to a Fra Fra? But perhaps if you and J—— were here I might need them; this too requires worship; at least calls for humility. It is a great comfort to be able to go on one's knees, on occasion or not. What it has cost me to pick up pins, and I cannot a-bear them on floors! The process has been thus:

[1] A saddle-horse.



"What it has cost me to pick up pins"

I suppose that you are altogether not unhappy since J—— is there. I do not know when I am coming, dear. I should like to spend the whole month of August with you somewhere; how young I should be at the end. . . .

June 17, 1888.

. . . The roses so far are somewhat disappointing. A cold June, after a warm May, seems to have affected the color of the light roses—they are too red. The dark ones are well enough. I begin to think that I ought not to continue the struggle with Nature and Society, but own myself beaten. Why was I not content with two lilacs, two Deutzias and purple perennial phloxes (which kill me as sure as a cockatrice, the purple phloxes; yet the peasants of Berkshire delight in them)? I should have M. to admire, and she never crosses and irks and disappoints. The question now arises, I know, whether if I had been the man to endure purple

phloxes I should have known, even as imperfectly as I do, how to appreciate a M. A riddlesome world. What say you to making the best of it? Narrow limits of a base content? But I must own that this wish for perfection may breed an angry resentment against imperfection which is all but blasphemous (not in you but in *me*). Suppose that nature says, you may have roses, under these conditions, of fighting the insect kingdom, the variable weather, the drought and the dust; what say you? Will you take my terms? Or will you have cabbages, when even cabbages shall require struggles too? I feel rebuked when nature talks so. But why should she make such lovely things the prey of circumstances, of foul creatures, of capricious skies? You see I have not got beyond the alphabet of life yet.

Now I must prepare for lunch, first to Boston, then to West Roxbury, an hour and a half to go, and as much to come. . . . I hope you have more peace with your garden. Mary Baumann must have revealed herself by this time.

August 16, 1888.

You are very far off in time and space, my beloved M. . . . It would be ridiculous were I to tell you how days go here. One is exactly like the other and the *other* is of the simplest pattern. In my den or study (for I have a bright new yellow floor) till 6½ P.M., going out a few minutes for a

dinner of which I have no need. Perhaps I spend five minutes in the garden after breakfast. There are a great many roses fair to see from a distance, but there is mildew and little that one could gather. I don't care for them; none of them can move my heart. . . . At 6½ I run in to Grace Norton for half an hour and have nothing to tell her, for we have talked the world out in these past half dozen years. . . . I have interruptions from bores now and then, but this is the general history. My only event has been a letter from an old pupil of 40 years ago, telling me that he had had a dim daguerreotype which I had given him, enlarged and copied in photograph, and if the copy he sends calls up half the pleasant memories which it does with him, etc.— This was a very bright and handsome boy whom I loved passionately—loved like *an aunt!* He has not had the reputation of a tender heart, and all the more grateful to me was a pleasant expression after two-score years. You will be amused with the result of the photography. . . .

25 *February*, 1889.

I am writing to you in a great coat, with my jockey-cap on—you will perceive that a jockey-cap must needs be part of my professional attire. The reason is that I do not find it easy to keep warm enough, for on Saturday I went to a funeral and caught a dangerous cold, and yesterday I was fear-

ing pneumonia, fearing, but knowing nothing about the matter; but everything inside my chest was burning with fever and I was coughing my lungs out.

The funeral was that of my dear Harry Whitney.[1] You did not know him I suppose — a classmate of mine, friend of forty years, and such a kind friend. He died upon a sudden attack, after two days. One funeral often leads to another, and the day being very cold and windy, I went only to King's Chapel. It is ridiculous that anyone should be so sensitive, but a trifling wind at the top of my head has several times given me a most extravagant cold. So all yesterday I did next to nothing, and all today I have written only a few letters. The world seems very queer: much as if I were not of it, not at all real. . . .

I was looking forward to beginning the rose-season in a week or two. The cold does not threaten to last long, but my lamentable susceptibilities may. Yesterday I went through with all the worst consequences in detail. "You will have pneumonia, from which few people that are well on in years recover." That being the starting-point, I endeavored to arrange my affairs. Everybody was going to hear the Manzoni requiem in the evening, and as the day had been long I meant to go to bed about 8 o'clock. But how to go to bed while any-

[1] Henry Austin Whitney, Harvard, 1846.

body was out of the house? I have always sat up till all my sheep were inside the fold, seen to all fires, doors, and windows. Will the time come when I shall have to delegate the shepherd's place? I did delegate it last night and all went very well. Even the night was not quite so long as the day.

This is or was such a beautiful day to work in, and I had it all to myself. What is the use if one can't turn a bright day to account? And this evening I shall not be able to read aloud to the family — a strange displacement of everything. But perhaps tomorrow the world will begin to seem natural again. It is natural, I must tell you, when small things appear of consequence, as for instance, whether I have spelled an old word with a final *e* or not, whether I have blotted my sheet as above. But now, today, only large things are worth minding, as the happiness of friends, the safety of the state, the condition of the dead; among the first, the happiness of my M., which under no circumstances not extinguishing consciousness can be anything but a thing of the first concern.

Now shall I pull off my great coat and sit by the fire? It would be a good time to have you here. I should like a little talk. . . .

Wednesday, 23rd *October*, 1889, 6 P.M.

. . . I found J[ames] L[owell] downstairs, and he staid below all the afternoon. He looked hag-

gard, I must own. . . . There are two comfortable signs of his mending: he had come back to a pipe and he liked to talk of old Boston. How he, being a Cambridge boy, should know the wharves, as I, born close to salt water, I don't know. I found that he used to board the East Indiamen (for we had ships in plenty then) and they would give him rattans and fishing-poles (bamboos). But I thought he would not come up to me on one point: "Did you ever lick molasses on the wharves?" "Yes, and go in from Cambridge to do it!"

Now I have materials for his biography which no other man can possess.—Well, though he had not regained his strength, he was like himself, and I was greatly comforted. . . .

You appear to have seen everybody that was requisite (Judge Holmes?) in Boston. . . . I shall not be satisfied till you see A[lice] J[ames], and I should smile upon any passion which you might contract one for the other. (Alice is a bit of a fanatic—you would not mind that. She is unmistakably divine; so we all think in this house, but she does not know how high I rate her.)

Mrs. Whitman you have effectually captivated, and that is worth doing. . . .

Sunday, 10th *November,* 1889.

One of those bores of which every man has his allotted share has been holding forth to me, while

I have been wishing to be at 22. There is no escape from them. I bow my head meekly, not always so very meekly, there are maledictions when the door opens, but I yield, give forced attention, hope that they will go, see them rise with a sigh of relief, see them sit again with a sigh of despair—well, probably I have had my allowance for today. . . .

I have ordered Macmillan to send you a book, Hamerton's "French and English." Everything I have seen of Hamerton's is worth reading at least in part. You will not be obliged to read more than you like. He knows the French well, has a French wife, and is a man unusually free from prejudice. I sent for two tales of Amy Levy, a young Jewess who died a few weeks ago, at the age of twenty-three. These I meant, if they turned out to be good, to send to you, but "Reuben Sachs," which I have read, is extremely flimsy and would hardly bear reading aloud notwithstanding the neat, beautiful type. . . . This is a disappointment, but not so great as it would have been to send you the books and have you find out their worthlessness for yourself. . . .

Overtures were once made me to accept a place at Columbia College. If I had I might come to 22 on my way from my classes and read some good German things with you. I might have you for a whole month. Would it not have been better to

have ordered my career with reference to such a possibility?

There are so many beautiful things in the world which go unread. I want to have all the rest of my time to read fine old romances of the Middle Ages, Spanish ballads, Dante, Homer, and ever so much more of the great and well-proved books with those I like; not to read them once, but many [times], over and over. What a world that would be! . . .

Tuesday, 12th *November,* 1889.

. . . In the afternoon James Lowell looked in, and now that he is established at Elmwood I shall see him often as of old—which makes the world look more friendly. Who says that literature is ill-paid? He had written a little poem, a very short one, I think, not to order, but for his own amusement, or perhaps because he could not help. A newspaper sends him a thousand dollars and asks only that he will send *something,* and he sends off his little poem. Going back to the house where he used to be happy makes him grave. His daughter is with him and has changed things just enough to have them not too familiar.

I finished a book of Miss Woolson's last evening —"Rodman, the Keeper, and Other Tales." Did I mention it to you? There are three or four very good things in it. With you in my thoughts I asked J. R. L. for something readable. He had only

a recent book of Stevenson's to name. It is not everybody that cares very much for Stevenson. Your "French and English" I shall have to seek here, for Macmillan writes that they do not publish it in America! Queer, since they publish it in England.

This morning I did a little work without interruption (it is not interruption when you or J. L. look in, but there are people who prefer morning hours for wasting) so I feel less dissatisfied, than when I look back on a day and say — nothing done, how much time have you? . . .

✠ Fra Fra. ✠

Sunday, 16 *November,* 1889.

Events have interfered with my writing you an intended line — very sad events. Two weeks ago yesterday we had a lunch for an Englishman, and I had the pleasure of seeing Mary Curtis, who had come home after a three years' absence. Yesterday I went to her funeral. Mary Curtis was (is) one of my very oldest friends out of my family. She was a friend of more than forty years. I used to talk almost my soul out to her when I was little more than a boy. She was a remarkable person — very clever, very bright and very various, very sincere and faithful. We were bound together by all these years of intimacy. She was left not quite alone because she had many half-brothers, but she had no

home, her only brother having transferred himself to Venice for the rest of his days. I was counting upon having her much to myself during this winter. She took a cold and died of pneumonia the very morning that I first heard she was ill. It was a dreadful stroke. If I could have seen her! She might have been happy in a way for years longer, for she had great intellectual resources. She would have made us a visit, and I should have talked all the years over. All that I had was two rather brief interviews, and yesterday she was borne by me in the church as if she and I were strangers. All her brothers are in Europe and away from home. I think I was the nearest friend that was present, but nobody knew it. I think I knew more of her than any of her kin.

Just as we were going to Boston for the service, I heard that Harry Minot, Kate Sedgwick's son, a lovely and most superior young man, had been killed in a railroad accident. In the afternoon I learned that James Lowell had had another attack of his threatening illness. I was to go to see him this morning (it is still evening) but had the last proofs of my book to return, and am lame with being too much in the garden, and two ladies are coming to an early dinner.

Yesterday I all but wished that things would cease, but I am not in a way to wish that, since I have children to look out for and other relatives, and you to think of.

My dearest M., it is not such a letter as this that you need. You are serious enough already. I think I am serious too. You must be in New York where there are people you love besides L——. But I wish there were more. Friends will go. I have now lost three of my most precious and more that were ill to spare. I have nearly every letter, perhaps every letter, that Mary Curtis ever wrote me. They were all letters of her own, different from anybody else's. She was by nature extremely reserved and rather shy with me till the last. I allowed six weeks to go by in the summer without writing to her, thinking she was taken up with her brothers. Then I went to her, wondering that she had not made appointments to see me when she came to Boston, as was understood. She had been ill, but was well again. I went with a slight effusion, showing how much I wished to see her. Her last letter, as it proved to be, began: "Why didn't you say this before?" So she had missed my letters. I have nothing to reproach myself with, in her regard. I had always loved her and had the highest opinion of her. But still, if I had known that she would not be with us all the winter I should have said many things before. I ought not to have minded her reserve. Wherever the good are, she is. She had much sorrow to live through and bore herself well. Dearest M., it is only a piece of life. But I have had her friendship and shall always keep it.

I have very little time to read, but am finishing the Italian Characters. That book has given me more comfort than anything I have read for years. When you read it, you will be with the noblest of men and women for nearly four hundred pages. I know that you will think with me. It will be a surprise, however well you may have thought of men and women and of Italians. . . .

20 *November*, 1889.

A voice in the next room—O why was such a voice ever given to a woman! . . . It is a sort of Arkansas voice, mind you, an Arkan*saw* voice, but almost the prettiest woman that ever was in Boston, who is to be married about this very time to a fine specimen of a British sailor—has a voice that even when it said "Y-es," or "I will, I will" must jar. Beauty born of murmuring sound has not passed into it. Rather give me a good bit of homely face if a sweet voice went with it. One could sit in the dark and make or think verses to it; one could save candles, gas, kerosene, and be happy. This voice which has gone (or *I* should have gone to pieces) belongs to a very good woman; a very "nice" woman; a very otherwise pleasing woman. She will never know how she has been operating on my nerves. Let the man in the cellar rattle his furnace a little longer, and I shall come back to peace and think of my M. in silence since I am not in the way of thinking of her to music. . . .

[In the early months of 1890 Professor Child's correspondent made a journey to Mexico. In the course of it he wrote her a number of letters, from which the following passages, bearing chiefly upon the journey and its experiences, are taken.]

8th *January*, 1890.

. . . Your journey seemed to me like a pilgrimage in the middle ages. From Washington to Albany, from Albany to Cincinnati, and oh, from Cincinnati to New Orleans, and oh, oh, 72 hours to Mexico! Bless your youth. It does not strike you as so very bad to be shut up 72 hours after all that! If I had not been lying on the sofa, I dare say the long journeys would not have tired *me* so much. But I am not going to tire you beforehand. . . . What I did not know when I was applauding you was that I was just losing a visit in the spring. Well, should I not have applauded still? Much pleasure may come of this Mexico after all. It will certainly be a considerable novelty. But how hard it is that there should be such interminable tracts — wastes I should call them — between here and any place in America that affords a variety. Again, I will whip myself up and not be faint-hearted for you. . . .

Mrs. R——has been gently beginning to make a socialist of me. That is she has given me a remarkable article by Sidney Webb on Socialism in Eng-

land, whence it appears to be sure that everybody who is for bettering the state of the less fortunate classes is by necessity a socialist. But there are several steps to be passed before one comes to no property in land, no incomes except from labor, and so on. I can agree that so far men have found no tolerable way of living, and that when John Rockafeller, or whatever his blessed name is, never heard of by me, lives with a reputed (though of course exaggerated) fortune of 120 millions, a certain class must be unduly favored by present arrangements. Accordingly Bellamy's "Looking Backward" sells to 230 thousand.

You leave Washington on the fourteenth, next Tuesday. You ought to have a lot of good books with you. Have you thought of any? Not H. Adams's "Jefferson," but a road-book. I am destitute of agreeable recommendations. My latest reading is H. James's "Siege of London," "Pension Beaurepas," etc., which you know all about. . . .

CAMBRIDGE, *January* 23, 1890.

I meant to have been waiting for you in Mexico; and you will be there before me: you will be there this very day, perhaps, and I think you will exclaim, Fra Fra — ! but don't finish. I have had my hands full, and though I knew perfectly well that a bit of greeting upon your arrival would content you, I

wanted to write you more, and so wrote nothing. One of the wisest saws in this world is "le mieux est l'ennemi du bien." Five minutes would have saved me from the pang of not being there to receive you — of being indeed a week too late. I ought to have written the moment you stepped into your train at New York, . . . or the next moment when you suppressed your tear. . . . It seems to me a long, long time since you went away and since I wrote you. I did not write much about your going because the journey daunted me; but now it is over you will find much to interest you and the return journey will not daunt either of us.

We are having a cold day, and the contrast to New Orleans is extreme. But I have not minded the outside world much. It is more than I can do to make my own little world revolve. Some comet is always getting into my orbit and causing perturbations. My publishers wrote yesterday that they were quite ready for No. 7. I am far from ready. The correspondence with London and Edinburgh about things which I wish to find and cannot is always hampering me.

I have seen nobody that you would care to hear about. James Lowell is only a mile and a half from me. I do not go to him and he does not come this way: he is shut up, as I suppose, writing a Life of Hawthorne. I have just finished another half year. How swift, how little done! . . .

We have just lost our old Francis Bowen[1] — seventy-eight years — and his demise brings me the nearer to the head of the list. Shall I actually see myself at the very head by and by? I shall have to learn manners to suit my place. . . .

What do you mean by *wanting* to be a Catholic? Are you not Catholic? Then what am I? I am secular, to be sure, a cult-priest, and I think it better for you to be in the world. Last night while reading a foolish novel in which a passionate lover, who had tried to push a rival off a high cliff, fell himself, was miraculously preserved, and turned Dominican, I was so much affected by (Thomas à Kempis's words?) "Lose all and find me" that I was not sure that I had not had a call.

Sufre, si quieres gozar;
Baja, si quieres subir;
Pierde, si quieres ganar;
Muere, si quieres vivir!

When such voices come to me, I feel as if I were all but ready to take a step. There is a glamour in the recurrence which for the moment subdues rationalism and reason. There was a time when perhaps I could not have resisted the fascination, for it is a fascination, an enchantment. If you fall in with a thoroughly unworldly and benignant old priest (not a fool) you may feel it in Mexico. Or shall we say:

[1] Alford Professor of Natural Religion, Moral Philosophy, and Civil Polity in Harvard College, 1853–1889; Emeritus, 1889–1890.

Nacer sin querer nacer:
Sin quererlo, padecer;
Vivir sin querer vivir;
Morir sin querer morir!
Pierde, si quieres ganar!

Still the old thought, to save one's soul. No, my daughter, your confessor will not turn your thoughts that way. Be what you are and will be. *Vivir y querer vivir* — and the world will gain whether you do or not. How grave! "Lose all and find me" is after all easier. . . .

January 29, 1890.

On the point of a dreaded and somewhat deferred journey myself, I find the situation very complicated. This journey I expect to have to make at least twice in every year; still, it is a little formidable, or at best a let and an impediment. It is to Boston that I go, sacrificing a bright sky to business, but things undone haunt me until they get attention.

This is a week of examinations and until Saturday I am free (though I spent yesterday on setting papers) to work in my own way.

We have had a mild season of winter, and yesterday, with the thermometer at about twenty, and an inch or two of clean, crackling snow on the ground, I took the first real walk I have had in a long time. But I have a quantity of stale work to bring up — things that I have touched or half done and have

become disgusted with. This is the weather for taking them up.

I wonder whether, with all the luxuries of a Montezuma train, they keep novelists to get up entertainment for the passengers. Very likely they have a library; but attractive novelists are not to be commanded by ordinary means. I doubt whether Howells or Harry James can be hired to write stories that end well. When stories do not end well, or do not end at all, I feel myself defrauded. I have read three of H. James lately in which we were left in the air. When last heard of, the important persons had taken no decisive steps. Upon the third experience I felt that I could not go on with H. J. unless I interposed somebody else. But this does not mean that I shall expect you to begin and finish a romance in Mexico. Now go to your temple or your wild horse and I will go to my business. It makes you seem nearer when I write one sheet about nothing.

Ever your f. and f.

✠ FRA. FRA. ✠

Buffalo Bill, says the morning paper, is trying for the Coliseum to exhibit him.

February 1, 1890.

One of twelve gone already, dearest M., and noted the more perhaps because I was therefore brought to a birthday. This I have celebrated only by

holding an examination. Still there are yellow roses before me, and three beautiful Catherine Mermets, and one beautiful white, perhaps the Bride. They give charm and dignity to the world. We must be of some account to have roses allowed us. The consolation goes deep. I reverence them as heaven-sent, to help us through the base or wretched parts of life. And then because that of which they are a type—womankind! Was it not in sympathy and pity that woman was sent into a world where there would be so much coarse clay and so much brutality? So you see, though you are in Mexico, heaven knows where, I have something very like you just under my eye. If I wonder why these were given me, it is only as I wonder why you were given me and my kind. . . . Were you in Europe I should know how to place you. In a country quite without geography, which is simply Mexico, you are entirely lost. Do you think you shall come out of it at last? Shall I see you in white in Stockbridge and no traces of Ixtaxihuatl or Popocatapetl about you? Perhaps you are enjoying the Mexicans vividly, and this is what I wish.

February 4, 1890.

I am delighted not to have heard from you, for I shall soon have written you seven times since you reached Mexico, in anticipation of a letter from you. That would in a measure restore the balance.

A subsidiary cost of my pleasure is the conviction that you have fallen in with the hero of your dreams — or of your waking hours — and that you are finding Mexico a great deal better than Spain, a castle in Mexico particularly.

Well, I had not thought to give you to an outlandish person. I find from reading "Lady Barberina" (H. James) that young ladies who have been accustomed to take their fences like a grasshopper in England cannot put up with New York, and in the end succeed in returning to their island. I do not think it hazardous to infer that Mexico would suit you as little as New York pleased Barberina, and that you will accomplish a return. But is it Prince Yturbide? The *turbide* is troublesome. Why not El Principe Sereno y Constante y Diáfano, or Conde Claros? Shall I see him in Stockbridge next summer, Principe or Conde? or shall I have to seek you in a hill-castle? *Mantenga Dios à tu Alteza,* anyway. You would not depart so far from Juliet as to have anybody but Fra Fra join your hands, I know. . . .

February 8, 1890.

We have a young girl with us who has lived in Mexico, and when letters were brought in this morning she exclaimed, "You have one from Mexico!" Here it is, mailed February 1, so that we are only a week apart from South to North, but

from North to South apparently longer. That is to make up for our paying only two cents postage from North to South, as my young Julia informs me I am to do, but are they really two and a half times as long in bringing you my letters? My first, as I hope you have several days known, was written on the Thursday when you were to arrive—much too late, as I have ruefully said. This, I think, is my sixth. . . .

You hit my birthday by instinct: the first it was, not is! I am not born again as I should like to be every twenty years. To be born again every year would on the whole be a loss, you know, even though I were born the same person, and not, as might happen, a person with an aversion to all my actual propensities. I might be born to be indifferent to roses, to poetry, to study, to almost anything but M.: I don't see how I could be so made over or distorted. But then I might be born to go many years without knowing her, for that has happened once. It is far better not to be born again at all than to be exposed to such risks. If I had been born over only once even, and some thirty years ago, so as to have a chance of living as long as she—that, on the face of it and at first, looks not so ill. But perhaps she would not have liked me at all then—perhaps it is things which I have lived off that make me tolerable to her. As it is my years certainly make me her Fra Fra. I have told you of my 1st

last Saturday. I have some relics of my flowers still, and I have your birthday letter, which out-pinks, out-violets, out-roses them all. . . .

February 16, 1890.

. . . I want to go to see Lowell this afternoon and my little Hoopers — five girls. This cannot be done unless I am taken by horses. Lend me a broncho! . . .

You, I imagine, are out of doors all day and never look at a book, brown as a berry, hungry as a hawk — taking prickly-pear hedges "like a grasshopper" (p. p.'s may be ten feet high for all I know) and perhaps you can shoot from your horse like Buffalo Bill himself. Shall I know my M.? if I ever see her again, which seems extremely problematical. You seem always as far off and as far back as Penthesilea. But you say your Aves? I know a little Catholic girl, who, as her father says, stops dancing only to say her prayers. A wild M., dark conception! But after all a girl who could not revert to wildness would not be good for much. However savage you may grow, I remain (with disciplined tastes for the same), your only

✠ FRA FRA. ✠

February 17, 1890.

. . . I read your letter with consternation. I had really imagined you to be leading the life which

I ascribed to you—all day out in the air, in wild scenes, with very sufficient enjoyment to reward you and to make you willing to have gone so far. Instead of that, eight days over perhaps a dying woman, with a very depressing prospect even if she recovers! I do not forget that you are nearly their sole dependence, and that you are doing a dear woman's better part which cannot be taken away from you; but it was too soon to have you called upon for such a duty. You had gone away to recover from the consequences of a very great strain and drain upon your strength and affection. My dearest M., your four thousand miles is a planetary distance: a fearful tract to go over in thought, and how much more in fact. I did not at all understand that poor Mrs. ——'s delicacy of health exposed her to such a contingency and exposed *you,* for whom by nature's law I could not help being greatly more concerned. And now there is nothing to do but to wait, at this awful distance of space and time. . . .

Since you will have a conscience that will not let us repine, I will take simple human nature's side. Indeed, I want my M. to be herself, to be everything generous and good; but it is because she has been so that I wanted her spared—a little while—till she might recover strength to go on with life. Now, all I can do is to love you, as it seems, ten times as much, and to think of you all the time,

as we say. I wrote just a little nonsense yesterday, which, if it comes to you, will show how utterly I misconceived the situation. Such delusion, such thoughtlessness as it now appears! But I am sure that my ever fresh and tender love shone through. How much do you suppose I care for my work now that I have your letter? Keep well yourself, my precious M., and be out of doors all you can.

Your afflicted and most loving

✠ FRA FRA. ✠

Monday, 18 *February,* 1890.

I carry you on my mind all the time, my poor M. Your days are now as much of one color as mine, and the hue not so bright. . . . Things will probably not move fast with you, and I shall be a week in hearing of any improvement that may occur. I do not expect you to write *now* until you have time to *waste*. . . .

The fair ladies of Boston have all taken to philosophy. Our Royce is giving twelve lectures in the most fashionable parlors to the flower of Beacon Street and Commonwealth Avenue. They will probably, these ladies, be soon saying that they are of the *religion de toutes les dames sensibles,* but I believe they are orthodox enough at present. Boston was needing a little excitement. There are seventy of these ladies — Mrs. Brimmer, Mrs. Whitman, etc. . . .

20th *February*, 1890.

After beginning with a big snowstorm, the sky has cleared up almost enough for me to see as far as Mexico, but not quite as far as Cuautla.

I will not ask myself idle questions—such as has poor Mrs. —— come through? Whatever her condition is, I suppose you are practically unable to be gone long from her. I don't see how you occupy yourself when you are not tending on her. . . . Think of it! you might be in New York hearing all Wagner's operas in the order in which they were written—which is thought to be quite necessary for our understanding of him. So far as I know, he is the only author for whom such a demand is made. Would you not rather, on the whole, be in Mexico? I wonder whether your peasants made a carnival at Cuautla. I am very desirous that they should do something for you to look at outside of your window, besides lounging round in picturesque costumes and on donkeys. Are there no serenaders, no aubaders? I can't conceive that my M. should not have made a stir in the place if she were ever seen. But she is shut up, poor sweet, and the serenaders know that there is a sick lady and so do not come to her window. . . .

21 *February*, 1890.

What a Lent you are keeping, and began keeping long in advance! If there is any verity in prophecy,

"for it, shall thy light break forth like the morning and thine health spring forth speedily." I am anxious about your health and read this prophet to keep up my courage. . . .

Though your journey will have been a defeat of my hopes and expectations for you, I am eager to hear that you are on your way back. I really do not see what it avails to write such things, but troublous days make one very monotone. I have only one round of thoughts about you, and that very limited. I fancy you sitting by a bed in a long, bare room, with a red tiled floor; then after a long attendance going to your quarters and writing a note to Washington, always saying, it is absolutely uncertain when we can take our first step northwards; there is no prospect yet. Then a short ride, perhaps, and back to the bedside. . . .

Friday, 14 March, 1890.

The strangeness of a letter from the Atlantic Coast Line has not even yet evaporated. I seem myself to have been in some strange line all this week. When you were in Washington I thought you would be at the next door. But nobody has said yet that you are in Washington. Did Congress adjourn on Monday to come and call on you? I expected this, but my newspaper, which is meagre as to Congress, did not say so. Did the retired navy officers who all live together fire a salute? I

suppose each of them is permitted to have one gun mounted before his house. And the diplomatic corps, what did they do? There must have been a stir, you must have received many delegations.

I followed you through your journey as well as imagination could work, having only a broad area to sweep over and no line. At 11 o'clock Saturday I said, there is her train! I allowed 15 minutes for contingencies and then you were at home. Well, when you were at home, did you not begin to feel your long journey? Were you put to bed to recover? Are you abed? . . .

Nothing has happened. The only thing we have to think of is James Lowell. I saw him this morning. This day makes three weeks in bed for him. He looks white, and very noble, I think. Our good doctor, who is close upon 80, spent two nights with him. I saw him, and he speaks with some comfort of the case. Still there is no security though J. L. is much more comfortable. The doctor speaks with admiration of L.'s courage and serenity. He must live. He reads light things, and he told me this morning that he had both heard and seen the robins, from his bed. I, who have been out every day, have seen no robin. They come to him first, and he has eyes which see many things that come late to me, or not at all. Life would be much grayer without J. L. . . .

Thursday p.m. 3rd *April,* 1890.

It is something to have you in Madison Avenue again, though I cannot look for you in my photograph again, and in fact you seem to me fixed in no place except in the second story of the Stockbridge house. This is spring, and I am baked in my den with almost a winter fire. I found it too warm out of doors even without a coat.

I have been looking over my roses a little, and mourning winter's ravages: nothing like it ever happened before. Yesterday I renewed my youth after a manner— did such things as only a young woman, a M., can equal (but *surpass* is nearer the fact), superintended the making of a border for a hedge, finished the first pruning of roses, went to see James Lowell, and walked home (very tired already), lighted a bonfire of leaves and rubbish, and had to watch it till 12½ out of regard for my neighbors' safety. I was not in *constant* attendance from 5 to midnight, but hours together, and all the last two hours — which was n't it childish? for there was no danger, only a bonfire rouses all the boy that is left in a man (and I had four boys to help me at the beginning). What was the consequence? I have been so tired all day that I have brought nothing to pass — just like a girl who has danced till 4 and then risen for breakfast. Now after all this bragging of my poor prowess, I see how it shrinks in comparison with days of yours of which you have

told me, and which very likely you are repeating in New York.

But how are your dear eyes, and how did you hurt them? Is it a sequel of Mexico? Perhaps you could not read your Howells in the train. We have finished and are bookless, that is, must fall back on old things. I feel very secure about your enjoyment of the "H[azard] of N[ew] F[ortunes]."

Your uncle has asked me to spend Sunday with him and I want to *be* with him ever so much, but I dread the journey and the spoiling of Saturday and Monday. I fear that I shall not go to Newport after all my balancing, but give up the rest of this brilliant afternoon and stretch myself on a (Carthusian) lounge. Where is my scourge — somebody has hidden it away or else the devil has turned it into a feather duster. Alas for my soul! But I can say my beads on that lounge, and half the string shall be for you.

Your frail but fond

✠ FRA FRA ✠

Sunday, 20th *April*, 1890.

Here I am sitting in state, and what do you suppose that means? It is R——'s birthday, and is that the reason? Nay, I have written to R—— and she would not care to have me sit in state for her. It means that I have had a lady to dinner and that she has just driven off, and that it was only

yesterday that she was seen and asked, and we could get no company besides William James and nothing to eat beyond the Sabbatical dinner, and with my S—— having been unwell and her mother consequently worn out, there was some slight anxiety about this modest dinner, which is now terminated after a pleasant 2½ hours, and so I am serene, but still have a festival feeling and sit in state (but I was smoking, which kings don't do, though I think I saw Pio Nono take snuff during the solemnities of Palm Sunday). Then I thought I would, not exactly come down from my state, since I was minded to write to M., which should elate and estate me only higher, and as for my unusual black coat, if Sir Joshua could paint only in full dress I ought probably to put off and put on something whenever I write to M. Such is the situation. . . .

Our lady was Miss—— —— of Baltimore. Very nice, very lady[-like], intelligent, high-minded. Why has she a gray hair on her temple and not so much as 35 years old? She seems to brush her hair back so as to show the gray! I think she is grave; abandon she has not—does not quite let herself go, but do people generally? She has no airs, is perfectly simple, very honest, and seemed to enjoy her small dinner, which proves that she is good.

Will James was charming, to be sure. I wish there were a Will James for her. Indeed, I should

like to marry off all the girls that I don't want to marry myself, to W. J., and perhaps I would give him one-half of the reserve.

The world is beautiful today: hepaticas, spring-beauties, anemone rues, are all in lovely flower. These little creatures share my heart with the roses. I feel also that the rose has reason to be jealous of a certain virgilia standing in the college-yard which I woo every time I go thither, and which has a very pretty consciousness of things which I have murmured under its branches. If I were to go mad, I am pretty sure that my delirium would take the shape of a passion for that tree. This confession I have made only to you, and if the case occurs you can come in with the diagnosis. . . .

There is a contest between the garden and my work now, though the weather is cool: as soon as a warm wind blows I fear the work will go to the wall.

Good-bye — how I should like to see you this afternoon! I feel strangely light-hearted. Perhaps I should rattle.

Your professed and assured

✠ FRA FRA ✠

Sunday, May 11, 1890.

This week has been full of committee meetings, four or five, of two hours each, say four, for that was enough. Anyway, I have done nothing but college

work *and* a little in the rose garden. Again and again I wanted to write to ——. I saw her slipping out of my hands. I feel just now like a pin bent in the middle, as if I could be straightened only by hammering. But I have had no time to myself all day till the afternoon, when I took to reading a rose catalogue, which resulted in my ordering more roses, which resulted in remorse, which resulted in my tearing up the order. It would be very foolish to have more roses when it has become uncertain whether roses will live here any more. One cannot easily believe that the mild winter has weakened or killed so many. If not the wet winter, it must be last season's fungus, and as the fungus is all but immortal, the roses before long will go. Still drops some joy from lingering life away. When they go I shall bestow all my keen passion for them on you, shall I not? You will not drop your leaves or refuse your bloom. Dearest M., how happy am I to have you *with* the rose and how shall I be consoled to have you after the rose!

The virgilia is a very tender object to me. I salute it every time I pass, and take the tender tips of its fingers in my hands. It is not entirely insensible to my admiration, but has a most virginal superiority. I should have *also* been in love with Dorothea Brooke (was that her name?) if she had not married that mouldy Casaubon. You see I am reading "Middlemarch" aloud—reading it for

286494

the first time. It compels continual tributes. I am amazed at the genius. It is all of G. E.'s that I have read save "Adam Bede." Miss G. does not clash with Dorothea and somehow no one of them, D., G., or V., seems capable to take the place of M. in the scale of being. . . .

The world is so beautiful now everywhere, or at least where grass grows, that I never want to leave it. If I could walk two or three miles, I would go to see all my friends while the world is so fresh. I think I could not fail to impress them as very young. But I ought to stay all day and every day in my den and work. I have not yet made ready for the printers, and how shall I get away until I am clear of the present job? No going. You really cannot live on dinner parties. Still, while your eyes don't serve I will hope you have one every day. I have been out once within memory. But I thought I would never go again. It was all men, to be sure. Who would care to have to quit a world that was all men?

I have seen nobody since I saw the Miss —— of whom you remind me. If I were to tell you of what most occupies my thoughts it would be . . . and James Lowell who has once come down to Norton's (in a carriage) to lunch with Mrs. Whitman. I have not seen him for weeks; all because of committees and ankles and perhaps roses in part. He was very bright at the lunch. Harry James wrote to

Grace Norton the other day expressing the most earnest wish that Lowell would never show himself in London in a state of declining health. The glittering society would no more mind him than a cavalry man minds the friend that lies in his way. So I gathered from what H. J. said: the cavalry man would, I fancy, if he could, so I apologize to him, and H. J. did not bring him in. But what a world! Who cares for its flattery or its fondling then? . . .

Tomorrow makes 13 years since I lost Jane Norton. I can't speak of it to Grace. I shall speak of it to nobody. But I shall make some sign to Grace.

Tuesday Afternoon, May 27th, 1890.

. . . I shall get "William and Lucy Smith" by and by upon the character you give. Life is richer for "Middlemarch." How nice it was of me not to read the book before! I go out less and less and see few people out of books, but I hoarded Dorothea till the day I needed her. My James Lowell is always here now—not to come down to me but for me to go to. He is in his old, easy, simple way, and he and I enjoyed a charming bear, who visited us at Elmwood the last time I was with him, as much as any of the other children. J. R. L. has been kindly writing for me to Lord Rosebery, who had politely consented to let me see (with other people's eyes) a valuable collection from which I

may extract ballads. He is *my* ambassador now, and has always acted as such, and much help he has given me. . . .

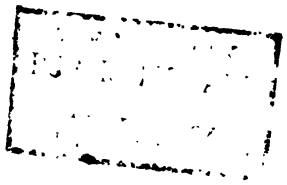
June 3, 1890.

. . . I have already been out among the roses, exulting over the fresh leaves and the promise of bloom—but sighing too over the lot of the beautiful, and the denial of perfection to us. I thought that I might be growing philosophical, for I imagined *some one else* saying my saws—wondering that I could condescend to marred delights—suggesting that the pain immeasurably outweighed the delight—and answered—my dear fellow, I will take an egg-shell full of pleasure if I cannot have a deep goblet, and I will strain out straws and sticks if I can't have it pure: it is not a base content: I am not accepting bacon for ambrosia and beer for nectar. This is nectar after all, though a little turbid. Swedenborg would tell us that it is men that mar the rose (observe, *I* don't say women). If men would get rid of all their badness, there would be no canker, no blight. Aren't roses, as they are, good enough for men? And men have not only roses but they have women. . . .

Friday Morning, August 8th, 1890.

For a good many days I have not had a breathing-spell in consequence of my getting the things

Professor Child in his garden



from Abbotsford, which have upset work which I supposed to be done, and so coming into embarrassment with my printers. . . .

This morning I had the pleasure of having Alice and William James at breakfast, and I wish you had been here. Alice is a star, and a rose, and an emerald, and ambrosia, and a nepenthe, and manna, and lotus, and haliwei, and piment, the best mixture of both worlds that can be. She is coming again "the day before she goes," and are you engaged on that particular morning? . . .

December 6, 1890.

This is winter by quality as well as by date. The sun is bright if the wind is cold. In three weeks the sun will be coming, or thinking of coming, north, which always gives me delight. I am able then to believe that the hepaticas are stirring. I have just come in from giving the few teas and half-teas which I have a warm dry winter wrap of pine needles. . . .

I am rid of a seventh ballad book and well into an eighth. I do not care now except to finish them, for the romantic things are all done. Still, I have some unprinted versions of Walter Scott's to go in, which give a little fragrance to the domestic tragedies and comedies. A good parcel came last week, many of them addressed to "Walter Scott, Esq., Advocate," from 1802 on — before he was in the

least famous. (These are copies only — the originals are like bank-notes and would pass current.) . . .

Yesterday I went to see my poet, and found him well, but first to see a dear young maid who is immensely suggestive of poetry. If the afternooon had not been well advanced, and the poet could have had daylight to see her by, I should have liked to take my little maid in for him to see. This young creature is Ellen Hooper, Mrs. Gurney's niece. I have a strong attachment to her. She is very individual — rather silent with her lips, but her face is eloquent. She now goes out and is not to be treated as a child. She was in Europe during the summer, and it is six months since my eyes looked upon her. I had made up my mind that she was to be a young lady. It is always best to let childhood end soon. But when she came into the room she presented her cheek to me, and what could I do?

She had to sit three hours twenty times to Whistler for a picture that I do not care for. I prefer a photograph which I have of her. After I had made a good call she took me to see their rosebed which was planted last summer. Our friendship began with roses. . . . Then Ellen walked with me to Lowell's. Though I walked all the way home I didn't mind.

To find this dear little friend so sweet and true offset all rheumatism. . . .

23 December, 1890.

We are so much farther to the east that our Christmas comes a day and a half earlier, so rest you merry and let nothing you dismay.

I have either been working a little too constantly (and at tiresome things) or have not been as well as is convenient to be, and am accordingly as rheumatic as two dry toasts, or as full of spleen as a weasel, or as cross as fire, or as irritable as a lamb. Perhaps it all comes from my going out to a dinner last Saturday after promising you the preceding Sunday that I should never do such a thing again. I not only went out to dine (at 7) but talked as if I enjoyed dinners above everything. The lady on my left hand was surprised that I should be there, and said, "You don't go out, do you?" and the lady on my right hand, my hostess, was surprised that I had accepted her invitation (or had come after accepting) and made me a compliment the day after—for keeping my word, I suppose. . . .

It was a plan of Sue's and mine to go out disguised and sing Christmas carols under William James's window, but a very young person, only three or four days from the skies, might not like our style. Were you near enough now? So, to interpose a little ease, let me dally with false surmise. May Christmas be full of love to you, whatever lacks.

Your faithful bedesman

✠ FRA FRA ✠

The Cell, January 19, 1891.

Not having made my cell very prominent, I ought perhaps to assure you that I refer to the cloister and not to incarceration, and not to an industrious hive. Looking back upon what the day has seen accomplished, I am almost ready to adopt the words of the dear King of France (All's Well) and wish, since I nor wax nor honey can bring home, I quickly were dissolved from my hive to give some laborers room. Think of it, from 9 to 7—two hours of college, nearly two more in visiting my dear J. R. L.—a hasty look at a book in the library, and here I am. This is not a sample of my days. J. R. L. I had not seen for three weeks, nor G. N. perhaps for two. I had heard that the poet was a little out of spirits and he owned when I put an oblique question that he had been, but now he was better. Such a ducal study gown, or dressing gown, as he wore today, of claret silk, wadded and quilted! I fancy he has astounding things in his ambassadorial wardrobe, would he only bring them out. A velvet morning coat, like an artist's, is his more ordinary wear, but the weather has been too cold for that. Now I have come from Grace Norton to whom I went to get such knowledge of the world as will keep me from covering with lichens and moss. This time it was only an anecdote from one of the Miss Gaskells. Mrs. Richmond Ritchie, *née* Thackeray, had been lunching or dining with Miss Gaskell, and

had been warned that a Manchester philanthropist of the rank of shop-keeper would be there, and she must not mind his far from careful dress. There was a Russian Prince there as well, and it would seem that his costume was not distinctive, for Mrs. Ritchie took the Russian to be the shop-keeper, and I don't know what imbroglios resulted. The opportunities for seeing people without going far for them are not many. . . .

Have you any books to read? I look forward to attacking a Polish romance translated by an acquaintance of mine — about 800 pages with 800 names hard to pronounce — for the benefit of my family. I have begun, but am daunted by the names. . . .

February 1, 1891.

Though I wish you may stay till Monday, I fix my eye on Washington, because I think that house of the M——s is out in the country and I know I never could find it. It is true I do not know my way in Washington, but I could go about the streets like the Moor's daughter who knew no word save London, crying M., and probably after a time I should attract attention. On the whole, it is a very sufficient pleasure to be waiting for you when you arrive. Do you think you shall know me? I am a year older today — take heed — I who would rather grow towards you than away from you.

It is a bad beginning to do no work of a whole day: so it has been: every blessed minute gone in writing letters and receiving roses and pinks and violets, with now and then a word to make things more sweet. Do not let me deceive you by my fine phrases into thinking that there has been anything resembling a concourse about my door. But I have had a good draught of affection, and now, mother and daughters having gone through great puddles to hear a Stabat Mater, I find myself in a very rare solitude and have begun to think of laying my hand to a bit of light work, after a word to you. . . .

I cannot keep away from roses more than a month longer. For a sop I think I have buried a thorn in my finger today while handling a few which were bestowed upon me. It is a pleasing irritation. But between March and now lies a dull month of examination books to read. . . .

Welcome back, my sweet M. Senators will now grow inattentive to business and there will be no quorum—which I shall like.

Your loving and faithful

✠ FRA FRA ✠

August 4, 1891.

If Ecclesiastes would spend a summer in Cambridge he would say of every day what he has said of lives and generations, the thing that hath been, it

is that which shall be. I have the same thing to tell you every year — save that every year a friend may die, which must generally make a sad variation.

I am really working now, and not writing letters, though it seems to me that I ought often to be writing to you, and I should write to you often were it not for the inevitable repetitions. I stick to my desk in the morning, read a few chapters of "Matrimony" to Miss G. A. in the afternoon, read an hour or two in the evening to my sister (it is "Mlle. de Mersac" just now), and sometimes I go to see, not J. L., any longer, but Mabel.[1]. . . Fancy how sad it is for Mabel, who is the only other person in the house, besides nurses and servants, and who sees almost nobody because there is almost nobody left in the town. All which, no doubt, I have said twice or thrice before. . . .

You hope that J. L. may be better. I fear that there is no hope of anything but a short rally, and the hope of that is but slight. I think much of my parting with him the day before I went to Stockbridge. It was very possible that something might happen; still I really expected to find him in his study again. He was put to bed — and he does not like a bed — three or four days after, and it is most doubtful whether he will ever leave it. His good-bye sounded sad that Friday. I assumed a cheerfulness which I did not feel. . . . When he

[1] Daughter of James Russell Lowell.

goes he will take off a great cantle of my world. He has been a good friend for many years and always *hold und treu*. And a very good man too, simple, faithful, with a nobleness quite his own. I fear that we shall never exchange words again, and I know that he will never come into this room again for a pleasant hour. . . .

August 13, 1891.

. . . Well, dear child, all is over,[1] as you know, and many letters have been called for in consequence. As I shall not fail to have said before—for I have been repeating it to myself in a reproachful way—I had my last hour and my last word with him the day before I came to Stockbridge, and did not know it. And it could not have been better had I known it, the wise may say; but I wish I had had a little more fear and had put a secret farewell into my good-bye. He had only three days of rational life after that. Now we know the precise cause of his sufferings, it is a wonder that he did n't suffer much more. Poor Mabel's behavior was exactly fit: all tenderness and affection, some tears, but no abandonment. I became much attached to her in the course of a few weeks and she seems to have been drawn to me. The decline was very rapid in the last few days. Mabel has one smile to hoard which he gave her on Monday. I have been look-

[1] James Russell Lowell died August 12, 1891.

ing over his letters today. He sometimes had a woman's fond way of phrasing, though he was not effusive. Even as ambassador he sometimes signs himself "Jamie." It is certain that somewhat most precious is gone from my world. . . .

I must confess that I had a serious day last Thursday or Wednesday. I had a singular attack simulating angina pectoris, word of fear. For two hours there was a wrestle. I don't think there was danger. The pain was excessive, but I know, from reading, that a. p. is very much worse. I should take ether in case of recurrence, but I will own that I should dread recurrence. When one is quite ready to die, when he can leave all whom he loves happy and fairly secure, an attack in the heart is not a formidable thing (saving real a. p.); I might also add, when he has done his work.

I fancy I have been writing incoherently. A man came in on business just at the wrong time, and now light is failing. But there is light enough for me to read again and again in my M.'s little note words which make me say, I should like to have her near me when I die. I am not uncheerful. Just now I feel my loss, our loss. I am glad to have him released from pain and the inability to do what he had in hand or thought. But he would have liked to live, and his mind was in excellent working order. He was not of the sceptic sort, neither was he of the blind believers. He was a poet and had

his revelations as such. I believe that he lives on. Think always thus. Can we imagine a possible happiness that the divinity cannot conceive? Can we wish more than he to effectuate the happiness we can conceive? He does not lack power; that you may know by looking at the skies. For the present we are in the dark. If light can deceive, wherefore not life? My dearest M., you are one of my evidences. James L. was another. . . .

Sunday, August 23, 1891.

Every word you write me endears you to me more. Think what it will come to, should I live to have a thousand letters more! First I will tell you that I have had only one more scene, or access, for I could not make a scene between 12 and 2 of the night. It was not very bad though very strange. Neither of the attacks was like a. p. That is very short, lasts only a minute at a time, and is terribly bad. Twice I have had a two hours' siege. Although I have no professional authority, I think that all that is indicated is a heart susceptible to rheumatism or neuralgia. I have had rheumatism nowhere else since March. Do not be concerned, my very precious M. Everything is done for me. I am not alone. My sister looks after me, and most tenderly.

The world will never be the same again without J. R. L. It was not such a loss as you had in

——. . . . But it is a loss that I feel all the time. I could resort to him for a certain kind of sympathy which I could have from no other man. Some day when we are together I will show you some of his letters. They are mostly brief ones, but they are so kind. I love to look at them. I turned over letters the other day and came upon half a dozen of yours which I had kept. The mere sight of them made the world rich. It was as if I had opened a charter chest and come upon deeds—estating to me the one genuine and imperishable treasure that life has to offer. Woman's affection is that. There are degrees of carat or of water in it: none more fine or pure than M.'s.

There is a thing which I regret, and that is J. R. L. did not die in his full mind. Could I have sat by his bed or his chair, his lamp slowly declining, and could we have talked of the other life, in which we both believed, could I have read him cherished places from the Bible, there would have been much happiness to remember from the last days. But there is much from earlier days. He was a man without stain, no meanness, no cruelty, no vileness, no littleness, noble and good and innocent. I wish I could be with you two or three days to talk all this over, with love and blessing, and what it all points to.

I am going on with my work in an easy way. I can't say that I care so much about it without

J. R. L., who has done much for me. He would have been so much pleased to have it all nicely finished up. He could take the fine points in a ballad. They seem stale. I go back to the fine ones at times and sing them and cry over them like the old world. That sweet Countess Martinengo wrote me once that perhaps we did not care so very much to have a great many people know how good they are. O, what a rich world, with its poetry, its roses, and better far, its souls! . . . There will always henceforth be such spirits as M. in it, and perhaps there have been a great way back (though Christianity and civilization count for something). . . .

Here I have been writing half an hour beyond the time when my maid rings me to dinner. I did not observe the point of the day when I began, and she respects the sanctity of my occupation so much that she very rarely summons me personally.

But good-bye now for a day or two. Your sweet words are more than balm. All my family are very happy: that is a great solace when I am without them. Be you so too—may you be. Always, to the last day of this our first life, and if so for ever,

Your loving and faithful

✠ Fra Fra. ✠

Thursday, 6 P.M. *October* 1, 1891.

I have just lighted my lamp, and the thought that James Lowell was out of reach came over me

—and then I remembered that it was Jane Norton's birthday, and took out her miniature, which Grace Norton has lent me for the time of her absence, and so I begin to write with the feeling of what has gone from the world. But what could I do better than think of you, as faithful as either of them, given me in later days to keep the world precious?

I am quite well, but not quite gay. I am not quite in harness, though I have been at college today. But I have all my family back and that will warm up the world, which has suddenly come to frost. I have had no flowers to look at but morning glories, which have deserved the name, and some Japanese anemones. The suddenness of the cold was a little depressing. The cold will be stimulating soon. I am glad that you have L—— with you and still will have: for tonight the cold would make me feel that you too might be having autumn thoughts. . . .

Tomorrow I really begin with my classes. I should a little rather be left to go on with my other work, to get it swiftly forward, but I read Hamlet once more, and often wonder at my luck in having for my work to read Hamlet with a hundred boys, some of whom are appreciative.

Good-night and good-morrow. Thank you for saying that I make some difference in the world to you.

October 25, 1891.

I have carried your letter of October 6 all this time in my pocket and not written you a word. Within two or three days it has been revealed to me that I was become the slave of routine, doing the same things each day from sunrise to ten of the night, under a hazy impression that I should get through at last. But it is bailing the sea with a sieve. I mean to stop bailing for a few minutes; nothing comes of it, at least not letters.

Hardly have I been with the roses: I have been afraid to transplant them, "rank their tribes" like unfallen Eve? (for I have thought of massing colors). The cold has put a stop to such thoughts, and it will perhaps be better for the roses in the spring.

The printers have put me in earnest, but it is clear that the publishers do not regard ballads, and copies of ballad-dregs, as the chief demand of the times. I shall not interfere to hasten their pace. I see my way to the end, and all I care about now is to have things in such shape that, in case of accident, the book might be called complete.

There are no social moments here, and indeed, I see only my neighbors. I want to see Mabel Lowell often, and wish she did not live two miles off. Yesterday she sent me her father's copy of the first folio of Spenser with her "dearest love." Mabel and I had not been acquainted: we made

progress during her father's sickness. . . . There is something of Lowell still left for the present —in her. I miss him—how shall I say? as I should roses, moonlight, birds? One can live without any of these, but sweetness, warmth, and grace are precious. One must not live for them, but we may sigh for their removal. My M. lends all these to life still—benedicite! . . .

I opened M. Bashkirtseff the other night and read a little—wonderful and tiresome girl, so far. . . .

December 17, 1891.

. . . The 22nd of February I am planning to have a solemn music in the afternoon in memory of J. R. L. There will perhaps be a choir of 50 boys, besides a fine choir of men's voices. So far I have chosen the most exquisite of Cherubini's Requiems, with the Kyrie pertaining to the same mass, a very beautiful Sanctus of Gounod, and perhaps Händel's famous Largo (with proper words). It will be a public performance, but I shall send tickets to all the nice people about here, and friends of the College. Now if *you* were making a visit northward at that time! . . .

I am going to take time soon—the students will be away in less than a week—and write you a real letter. You have had nothing lately but scraps of billets from me. I will tell you more about the commemorative service by and by. I wish it were right

to have a whole Mass of Cherubini's. My dear J. R. L. was no unbeliever, but he was not of Rome. If anything could carry me over it would be the Masses. They ought to be true; they must be true to something that cannot be lightly esteemed. They are waiting for me, and a guest to tea, so now only receive the repetition of all the dearest and tenderest love in the world and of the homage that man must pay, be he Fra, paladin, or poet, to such a being as my M.

Your faithful

✠ FRA FRA. ✠

Wednesday Morning, February 3, 1892.

Nothing is so enlivening as to break through a routine. So, though it is against all rules, I read your letter (that is not against rules), and take up a pen without regard to the supposed duties of the day. There is a higher law.

First, I am very much grieved to hear that Mr. Ward[1] is not only sick still (sick he is, not "ill"), but in a way which affords so very little hope. He has been an ornament and a fragrance to the world, and besides that a precious friend to you, and to me always a kind friend too. Tom was of old my pupil — about 1860 — and always much loved by me. I should like to write to him.

Tomorrow comes my examination and after that

[1] Samuel G. Ward, of Washington.

a long piece of drudgery, which, however, need not be grumbled at. No one who undertakes an industrious life escapes drudgery. Think of a prime-minister with his state-dinners. A poet to be sure? But a man is a poet only a few days out of the year. Then why should a fellow who can at least now and then write to his M. not take his share of the dull work which makes the world go on? . . .

A few minutes ago our choir-master was here to consult about one piece more for the 22nd. Great pains have been taken, and the music is very good. You say you can come. That surpasses my wildest expectations. I have often tried to persuade myself that something else might bring you, but I never believed that you would come. I even said, perhaps she will come here and stay at least the night. Now I find that Miss —— has been asked to our one room. If you *will* come, I shall consider it a beautiful tribute to J. R. L. I shall save two or three places for you. I think I gave you a list of the pieces. Anyway I will give you the whole programme, as we have it now, *fixed*.

Requiem — Cherubini — C Minor Mass.
Miserere — Allegri (part).
Pie Jesu, Agnus Dei, Cherubini — D Minor Mass.
Palestrina, Omnes amici.
Mendelssohn — Beati mortui.
Christopher Bach — Motet.
Gounod — Sanctus.
Mendelssohn — Periti autem.
Schubert — Great is Jehovah.
Organ.

I do not doubt that the music will be lovely, the performance I mean, for the music is of the highest style. A great many nice people will be asked, but we shall not crowd.

Thank you, sweet dear, for remembering my birthday. I have some celestial roses before me now. They all were so good as to open well. I certainly don't regard my occupying of this sphere as a matter of consequence, except as showing that a very unworthy fellow may have all sorts of good things showered upon him—if that is encouragement to anybody. . . .

Wednesday Evening, March 2, 1892.

The 22nd of February is a long way behind me, and the business connected with it was despatched in the two days that followed. But, to make up for the good bit of solid time that I spent in the preparation, I shall have to be very assiduous for two or three weeks yet. I have had a threatening of illness which, however, seems to have passed and I am to go out to dine tomorrow! which shuts out nearly the whole world from my sight—not you. I ought to explain a thing so "disproportioned" as Shakspere would say. Well, it is only that people have been asked—and I asked to meet them—to whom I am much attached, and whom I never go to see (the people who invited me to pass a night with Matthew Arnold at their house). The last

time I went out to dine was a year ago, at the same house to which I am invited tomorrow. I had said just a week before—never shall I go out to dine again, and I have been repeating the asseveration at intervals ever since, but still I am going once more!

We have been, for us, gay of late; but as long as we do not have a dinner at seven o'clock I think I can put up with life. The courage to give a dinner at all is what I am sure I shall never have. All which must sound quite incomprehensible to you. You would not shrink from two or three a week, I dare say.

At present life seems to be standing-water. I do not get on. I have not finished my printing, and O what is much worse, I have produced a scarcely perceptible diminution of a great pile of examination books. But you cannot pity me if, under such circumstances, I will still go out to dine. . . .

This, I believe, makes up my life since I wrote to you that I should not let the grass grow under my feet again. I almost believed that spring was come. I thought I heard a crow (delightful bird), but an uncompromising winter snow has come and I am not pruning roses but hug the house. But I am glad to say that I enjoy thinking of them: it would be a black sign if I became indifferent. Snow and ice are best for me till those books (examination-books) are done.

We have heard a great deal of satisfaction and approbation expressed about our commemoration of James Lowell. To me it was a very serious thing, and therefore when friends have declared it a "success" or the like, I have not felt entirely in harmony with them. But people generally have been more felicitous in their terms, and really have exceeded every expectation. The absolute silence from the first note of the organ to the last of the Sanctus showed where their thoughts and what their moods were. I have been much pleased by many saying that the service was the most fitting thing that could be, and much the more that not a word was said. I do wish that my M. had been there. I know she would have been in perfect sympathy. Of New Yorkers I think there were none except Mr. and Mrs. Godkin, and I do not know whether they are affected by music. I have lunched with them at Theodora's, to my very great pleasure. I never had more than five words with Mrs. Godkin before. . . .

Your news of Mr. Ward warmed the sky. May all go well. You have not been thanked for C. de Noël,—what an omission! . . . Now off to the tea table which has been waiting while I wrote. If I hear a crow tomorrow, I will write him a sonnet. And yet I begged Howells only a week ago to suppress all sonnets in his *Cosmopolitan Magazine*, and am near to thinking that sonnets should be a

capital offense, the *printing,* not writing. But indeed I shall show mine only to the crow and then it will be caw me, caw thee. . . .

✠ Fra Fra. ✠

April 4, 1892.

. . . I have been reading aloud, in the evening, FitzGerald's version of Calderon's "Mighty Magician," another piece of the very highest merit and delightfulness. Did I not read it to you once? I thought last evening, how I should like to read that again and often to M.! It carried me above all pettinesses, discomfort, misgiving, worry, worldliness — all the ignorant or too present: I did not stop a minute; it was rolled off as fast as words could fitly go, and my hearers, wife and children, were in much the same rapture as I.

I begin to feel natural tastes again: everything has been as flat as flax-seed tea; I shall be looking out for books now that I see you are wanting one.

I have noticed that association, perhaps with Washington people! has lately affected your language in a slight way. My M. always writes nice English, very nice English. There has lately been an influenza of *would* in the wrong place, afflicting this land. People are saying to an alarming extent: I *would* like, *would* you like, instead of I *should* like, *should* you like. Within two or three weeks, I have seen two or three "I *would* like's"

in M.'s handwriting. I wish M. to keep up her standard, however far south she may go; the south has always been wrong here. English novels begin to show the same perversion. Should you prefer to have me hold my tongue? I think not. It now occurs to me how very bad my handwriting is; it always is bad unless I take conscious pains with it. Now to examinations. . . .

November 6, 1892.

It is of course quite out of the question, my wishing to have you all to myself one birthday—it would be very far from altruistic—but I wish something so altogether elysian as an hour under trees or by a brookside might some day be granted me before the end of the century.

This day has been celebrated by thoughts, and only by thoughts. Far off its coming shone, and still I found nothing to send you. I owe you two and don't pay. The two would not come in. I wanted a nice book for today, but could not find nor hear of any. The first that turns up I shall date back.

It is very troublous not knowing the environment, as they say. Now when you were in Madison Avenue I had the means of bringing you vividly into sight. I knew that you would be in that picture some time of the day. It was a solace not to be estimated. Tell me if the objects are so placed, the

Sphinx, the vases, Aunt——, if the book-cases and other furniture can be readjusted by imagination so that I can see you among them. But it can't be so, and I shall never see Washington and I Street.

I have had too much company today. It was not known that it was my day for contemplation. . . . The recollection of your fidelity is wonderfully sweet. I know that a more faithful heart than yours has never beaten in a woman's breast, and if not in woman's, decidedly not in man's. So much faithfulness, so much capacity for the extremity of affection and devotion and tenderness, so high a spirit—Oh but I am not meaning to take you to pieces—such a complex of all dear, and sweet, and fine, and noble things, can it be that such a girl is born somewhere in the world every day in the year, every month in the year? Let me see, there was Hermione born in January, and Beatrice in February, and Viola in March, and Portia in April, and Perdita in May, and Cordelia in June, and Juliet in July, and the Roman Portia in August, and Olivia in September, and Desdemona in October, and M. in November, and Celia in December. So we bring the months round, and not much further can I go. And to think that my M. should be all the eleven together—so would I say and brag, were I praising her. But I am only writing a letter to pour out another year's love in advance and a back-year's love which I owe. . . .

MONDAY, 26 *December*, 1892.

(We shall not be able to write '92 much longer, so I put in the year.) One violet will scent a room, and your violet calendar will keep me so fragrant that people will think I have just been converted by St. Cecilia "and say I wonder this time of the year, whence that sweet savour cometh that I smell here." I was just about to put it into my pocket for 1893, when I observed that the old year was not quite gone; so there it lies under my left elbow waiting for next Sunday. Like children I wanted to begin with my gift before the time. Now there are six days left of this familiar year, and I might spend them in asking whether I have loved my M. enough. But if I have not, there is no retrieval; and I *have* loved her every day with faith and fervor. . . .

As to your not finding things for me, you always find the very thing that was indispensable. Shall I mention the cushion, as sweet of odor, as the Chartreuse which my brethren make, is of savor; the silken purse full of golden beads and thoughts which keeps this paper flat as I write; the book cover; the calendar of last year, and the year before; and now the little calendar without which I should not be able to find my way into 1893, but which, in my left pocket, will perhaps take me safely to the very end of it? And from me you have only a pretense of a seal, and a pretense of a picture. But I really

am going to Boston some day in the first half of January.

You are a true child of our order for ubbidienza. I am reading "I Fioretti di San Francesco," and I find you as good as any of the frati, and so I will say as San F. did to Bernardo: "Ora comanda tu a me ciò che tu vuoi ch'io ti faccià, perocch'io ti ho promesso ubbidienza." . . .

I have recommended my way to several people without bringing them to it. Make up your mind what line to take, and then order 10, 20, 50, of the same thing, say boxes of feminine soap. (On Theodora's box I wrote:

Amitié bonne
Se savonne.

Don't you think that that sounds quite genuine and proverbial?) When instinct pointed me another way I followed. I made it as hard as possible for people to give me anything. What does a man who has taken vows of poverty want? what can he accept? He wants nothing but his missal and his calendar. I sent two bottles of our cordial, by way of exception, to as many friends (and told G. Norton, who knows I hate the phrase, that I was "cordially hers"). . . .

Thank you for liking to be loved by me and for letting me love you.

Your ✠ Fra Fra. ✠

least of the least, and constant bedesman.

Monday, 30 *January*, 1893. 6.30.

That is the point of the diurnal revolution where I am, just after receiving a second call from a discharged convict, who finds it difficult to get back to a respectable career, a pretty tough problem for him and for me. Having had to do with two or three of these fellows, I am likely to have a very fair clientèle. They evidently were much more comfortable in durance, but I have not heard from any of them that he preferred the fleshpots of captivity. It is wonderful what decent-looking fellows some of them are, by nature; or is it that I am not a connoisseur?

Well, dear, your last letter was particularly satisfactory. The more lunches and dinners, the better. . . . All these I once liked myself and I went out to a 5 o'clock tea not longer ago than Friday (the next house). As you say, I should have died with half of your achievement, and (as you do not say) should have died ignominiously, while you would have the proud acclaim, *morte sur le champ d'honneur;* but the Neys, the Marbots, I may say rather, the Jeanne d'Arcs, don't finish in that way. It did you good, naturally. You were made to be a queen of society, and even a brief interlude of reigning sets you up. But don't abdicate, and most of all, don't go into a cloister. . . .

I find that when I finish a bit of work I am still

capable of elation of spirits, but only of moderate elation. It is some years since I have been in absurd unquestioning high spirits. . . .

I have heard something about Renaissance costumes here.[1] Norton is said to be applied to for instructions. Now if he were enterprising, if he were Worth-y, he would open a shop, an emporium, "Renaissance parlors," and in two months make a fortune — all in the interest of art, too. And you would be a customer. By St. René and St. Renard, I have a great mind to do it myself, though I know not one cut from another. You would be a silent but active partner, would n't you? Well, good fortune to that gown, though I shall not see it. I never see you in any of your grandes toilettes, do I? . . .

March 4 and April 6 are before you, and Mrs. Kuhn in anticipation for the inauguration. This and the Renaissance dress which requires a month's forethought, fill up the picture very nicely. All of it will be salutary for you. . . . Go with you to the World's Fair? Were I a nimble and a quibbling Shakspere, how I would answer you, my fair. Another pleasant prospect, and every prospect pleases. I must take out my calendar and mark these all down. . . . Perhaps to see you in April, were renaissance for me.

[1] An "Artists' Festival" in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts was about to occur.

February 1, 1893.

I was going to write 1950, but thinking of you and your roses I will amend the record and say 1850. — 1850! and I am a student in Göttingen, and wear boots five inches above the knee. Nobody that I can remember ever gave me a rose up to that time, so this is a beginning of a new life to me, and what a blushing letter shall I write you, of deeper dye than Catherine Mermet, of which I have glorious specimens before me, quite up to the tint of American Beauty, if that is the name of those great globes. And what shall I say in 1850 too, "best love and all the good wishes in the world"? Was it not worth while to live six times Jacob's service, which I suppose is about the time you would have appointed me, had we both been on the stage together then, but you were not yet "come from afar." The roses were in excellent condition; they came about 3 o'clock marked "please rush." I might, if I could be superstitious, be a little alarmed by this day's peculiar gracing! . . .

March 26, 1893.

I have had to spare you my conjurations to get well and to content myself with silent wishes, for I have been immersed in work or occupied with company. April is close at hand. We have passed from winter to spring in two days' space, and plants are bursting without any recollection of the depth

of snow and ice which covered them as it were yesterday. If you have passed from languor and feverishness to vigor and freshness, whether in the same space or more gradually, and are now in condition to think normally of your renaissance costume, I must needs be contented. . . . I have been pretty well housed since November, with the exception of college hours, but yesterday I inspected my roses — finding them much the worse for the winter — and pruned a few. I do not see how I am to perform my usual part to them unless I get a pair of artificial ankles. I am ridiculously infirm there. Work is pressing too. I have had a summons from my publisher. Still I shall adventure. I cannot have the old rapture of long mornings in the garden. I suspect that even an hour over roses will leave me incapable of standing on my feet for the rest of the day. But I am willing *almost* to die for them. . . .

There [in Philadelphia] my Helen lunched with Dr. Furness — not old, but 91 next month — by whom she was affectionately received and made very happy. You ought to know Dr. Furness. I don't remember any man living whom I should so much wish you to know. You have friends in Philadelphia, of course. The Doctor and I think very much alike. He would take to you instantly. On your way back to Washington do stay three or four days with some Philadelphians and have yourself taken to see the dear Doctor. Mrs. Caspar

Wister, his daughter, who lives with him, is a very attractive woman, and Horace F., my dear friend, would read you Shakspere. (Mrs. W. says that he reads better than anybody since Mrs. Kemble.) . . .

27 August, 1893.

Why do you suppose I have been silent so long? Not because I have not thought of you every day, but because I have been so tedious to myself that I fear I should be infectious. I have had rheumatic gout since the beginning of July, and am now writing in slippers, instead of wearing shoon of cordewaine, or whatever is finest, as would be fit when addressing my sweet M. . . . Occupation has not been lacking. I have spent some weeks on a glossary which I have to make, and it will take all the time to the end of September and the beginning of college to complete it — perhaps more — and even then I shall have to seek information in the north of Scotland as to many queer words. The summer has not gone to waste. . . . Almost everybody is away from Cambridge and I cannot seek the few that are left. My sister is with me and treats me as sisters do brothers. I am scarcely allowed to fetch a chair or help myself any way. I work all day at my desk (with digressions of necessary letter-writing) and after tea read a novel to my sister and play bézique, my only game.

I have not heard of any nice new book (I should

send it to you if I had) but content myself with Trollope, lately with "The Claverings," a very fair story. I get up two or three times in the night, when gout is raging, or it may be rheumatism, and read a little. . . . Finding Drummond's tract, "The Greatest Thing in the World" lying about, I have read that, and it affected me considerably. You have seen it, no doubt. I did not expect to like Drummond. But this little book is a very good book and very well written. Nothing can go quite deep enough. Of course we can be satisfied, if God is Love. But there are difficulties arising from experience, of which D. says nothing, of which even Jesus said nothing. Nobody has ever said anything which recurs to me oftener than the words of a Frenchman (a master house-painter):—

Je crois en Dieu qui a écrit dans nos coeurs la loi du devoir, la loi du progrès, la loi du sacrifice de soi-même pour autrui. Je me soumets à sa volonté, je m'incline devant les mystères de sa puissance et de notre destinée. Je suis l'humble disciple de celui, qui nous a dit de faire aux autres ce que nous voudrions qu'il nous fût fait, et d'aimer notre prochain comme nous-mêmes. C'est ainsi que je veux rester chrétien jusqu'à mon dernier soupir.

But this was said by a man (near his death) who had been doing a wonderful deal to make the world better, house-painter as he was. I look about

every day (every night) and say, what are you doing? You have been today making a glossary. Whatever is said about Love ruling, there is a mystery to bow before, a painful clash, as it seems, of events with our cherished maxim. We must bow—we can't deny without going wild. . . .

November 5–6, 1893.

. . . I have had company for three hours, . . . and the morning was very short, and the day is gone, with very little to show for it. This seems to be the course with all my days now, and I make my reflections when my head goes on my pillow. But this day is not quite to go without my sending particular thoughts to my sweet M. That is not an act of virtue, but not to have sent her a great oblation of affection would be a greater miss and disappointment to me when I take my leave of the day than those I ordinarily have to regret. By this time she is convinced that next to herself, whom for fidelity I rank highest, I am the least inconstant in affection—is n't she? No man, out of a sonnet, must profess himself equal to a woman in that regard, I suppose; but I say this in homage to you and to womanhood, not because I have any consciousness of variableness. My M. is always the same dear and lovely being to me, and I never have to whip myself up to love and prize her, and I require no reminders of her. All the same, it seems to

me that I can do next to nothing to add to her happiness. I have not gone to see her in two years, and I have not even sent her a book for a very long time. It has all been serious and silent thought, with now and then a letter. But she likes to be loved, and prized, and reverenced, and there I am not wanting. There is so little left in me but dregs that I might doubt whether I could pour a strong and clear libation on her altar, but whatever else I doubt about I have not come to doubt of the strength of my love. . . .

The old friend who looks me straight in the face from my table, James Lowell, has been brought vividly back through his letters which I have been reading in two big volumes. I was a little surprised to see that two big volumes could be made of real letters, for such they are, not too literary, but as off-hand and familiar as he was accustomed to be in real life. He was always decorous, not riotous. If you see the volumes you will find one or two marks of his friendship for me, which it would make me blush to point out to you. I cannot pretend not to feel pleasure at having discovered them. I have private documents of the same tenor to be sure; I mean that I was pleased to have him write kindly of me to others. There are a great many bright passages in the two volumes, and a considerable variety of them. Of course I could not expect that all the world should be as much interested as

I, but I can say that anybody who can bear to read letters will like those.

Bless my sweet M. from all trouble and with peace for another year. I am become very distrustful of length of days. . . .

Your fond and faithful

✠ FRA FRA. ✠

December 31, 1893.

I have had an overflow of proof-sheets, very uninteresting but clamorous for attention, which has prevented my dedicating these holidays to the proper use. There is a parcel on my table now, but I am resolved to have this last day of the year to myself (as much as a coming influx of company will allow). I want to send a wish to you at the moment of the new year, and I expect this to be with you tomorrow. . . .

I am very glad to hear of the baby mastiff, and have long wished that you might have such a friend. I am glad too to hear of Mr. Ward's proposition [to read Dante with you]. If you accede to it you should have Scartazzini, who has made the other editions out of date, and I should send you Scartazzini; so let me know. I got a little book to send you at Christmas—biographical—but thought I would look into it first. I discovered pessimism, cynicism, scepticism, and enough of these to disgust me—for there was no reason

but a disappointed ambition for a place ; so I didn't send the book.

Your calendar shall see me through the year if I can manage to keep my footing in the flood of time. The old ones are marked with many red-letter days. I take that of 1893 out of the left-hand pocket at this moment. . . . I never had so grave a year as that which is all but gone. My thoughts have been deeply tinged with mortality all through. That means that all the questions which we can't answer have been weighing on my mind. But if I can't answer them, I can turn them. I think of the human creatures that I have known, face to face, or by report, and make my answer out of them. A thousand years are as one day to the disposer of all the things that trouble us, and we are bound to the day we are living, and only by great effort can take a glimpse over the thousand years.

But we have to live from day to day, and I hope you find some pleasure in the succession. If you have grippe, the pleasure will be less, and health is one of the first things to be asked for you. I should like to hear that you have some good society, and perhaps I may take that for granted. Mr. Ward and Dante would go a great way, but it is wholesome to see a great many people if they are of the right sort. Even I see people. I have used qualified freedom from lameness to look up a few old friends. I even went to a lunch to meet M. Paul Bourget

the other day, but I had nothing to say to him, for imperfect hearing disqualifies me from conversation in any language but English. I don't know that I lost much in this case. I found other people with whom I talked with pleasure. We had people to dine at Christmas, we are to have a few young people (three students from South Carolina) today. And I have Catherine Ireland here, for the whole winter, or longer, and she is a very great pleasure. It is years since I saw much of her.

I am getting slowly through with the last parcel of ballads (not the last number of the book, there will be one more of indexes, etc.) and shall be very glad to have it off my hands, for now it is only a necessity to me and no interest. There are other things which I should like to do.

Dearest M., your last words for Christmas fill my heart with satisfaction and thankfulness to you and for you. Receive the like from me, and with every wish that love can form.

Your faithful
✠ FRA FRA. ✠

[*No date.*]

These from a proof-sheet I was correcting yesterday:

Ma mie reçoit de mes lettres
  Par l'alouette des champs;
Elle m'envoie les siennes
  Par le rossignol chantant.

Sans savoir lire ni écrire
Nous lisons ce qui est dedans;
Il y a dedans ces lettres:
Aime moi, je t'aime tant.

. . . I think it was a good time to be writing you these words while you were in church, thinking of me a little. I have not ceased to say prayers, and shall not while I breathe. . . .

14 *May*, 1894.

. . . We have here an interesting old Scotchman who has lived 33 years in India — an archæologist of distinction. He has published authoritative books on the Indian temples and other architecture and knows everybody in India. I have had talks with him about the missionary work, and have heard interesting things, a little of which I must tell you. He believes in missionary work, but, said he, people are christianized without missionaries. At a certain place with a hard name a silversmith's son got possession of a translation of the Bible, and he was seen to be reading it. People asked him what the book was; "O it is a book with very good stories in it," he said. "Read us some!" So he began to read to them and large audiences gathered. They had to take a room for the reading and some two hundred would gather. After a while a missionary came to the place, and asking about the religious condition of the people, found that there was a considerable company of Christians there.

How was this? No missionary had been there? "No," they said, "but we have had the book." "Ah then, you must wish to be baptized?" No, they wanted none of his water. Why not? Because John came baptizing with water, but when the Messiah came he was to baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire. What do you understand by that? Why, when our hearts are full of good thoughts and desires, that is a baptism of the Holy Ghost. And how about the fire? Why, when our hearts burn with love toward our fellow men, is not that a baptism of fire? Then the missionary asked them if they had read Revelations. Yes, that is a good book, a hard book. Do you understand it? For example, what can be the meaning of the New Jerusalem that was seen coming down from Heaven? Look down on that village, they said, full of thieves, liars, and every sort of bad man. Should these all turn about and become good men, would not that be a New Jerusalem coming down from heaven?

One day the silversmith's son was not to be had to read to them, and they asked some poor fellow of their number to take his place. The man could not read, but he took the Bible and opened it very carefully where Job should be and gave them the first five or six chapters from memory. Shortly after, trouble came upon him. His house was burned down, his wife died, his son died. The un-

believers told him that all this came of his neglecting the sacrifices to the old divinities. The man ceased to go to the reading of the Bible, and one of the usual audience, a young girl, asked him why this was. It was because he could not bear the taunts of the people he should meet on his way. Why, said she, Job suffered twice as much as you. But Job said,—shall I receive good at the hand of God and shall not I receive evil? The Lord's name be praised!

There is a good deal more that I could tell you, which reminds me of what dear Mr. Whittier said about a book I lent him once concerning the people of Southern India. It gave him great joy to see that God had in his own ways spoken to these people too. The missionaries, I hear from this man, preach Matthew and Mark, with very little theology, no particulars of the theory of the Atonement, but only that Jesus offered himself as a sacrifice for sin—which is an idea that commends itself to their way of thinking.

Roses are now in beautiful leaf, and their enemies have done little harm so far. My feet are not good enough for a rose-grower, who should be making continual rounds. . . . We shall not see our respective roses but I shall see yours in mine. . . .

Ever your faithful and most loving

✠ Fra Fra. ✠

February 3, 1895.

I can scarcely write without touching roses, the roses in which many friends strive to hide a fact. Indeed I cried, No more! No more! for they were too beautiful for words, beautiful enough for you, and I have always maintained that not to even the loveliest woman in the world should too many roses be offered. If I could only have diverted one cluster to you, and another to L——, I should not have minded the numbers. They are today disclosing new charms as they unfold. I think I never saw anything so entirely wonderful and worshipful. I cannot accept them as mine. I felt that it was all but a sacrilege and that a dozen of roses, perfect in form and hue, like twelve lovely girls at the brightest point of youth, were sent to help out my day. What I did was to fall before them and worship them.

Well, I have passed the line now.[1] The fact became public, I know not how. I had a letter from a dear girl in Baltimore; a plate with Shakspere mottoes from Horace Furness, which showed knowledge in Baltimore and Philadelphia. I am not in the least confused by my promotion, so to call it. Am I a sage? Where is my wisdom! I might almost say my sobriety? . . .

Now, my sweet M., I must tell you that I cannot look at myself quite as you depict me with the pen

[1] His 70th birthday.

of affection. My career is far from satisfying me. All that I can see of myself is that I have dearly loved you and some others. I pray that much may be forgiven to those who have loved much, and that is all I have to proffer. . . . For the love I get,— that is like heaven's mercy, and no account can be given of it beyond just that.

[*No date.*]

. . . Your friend Charles Norton is giving a course of six lectures here on Dante, and Sanders Theatre is crowded every night. I do not remember any literary course in Cambridge being so well attended, and it is all sorts of people that go. We are so much belectured in college on every kind of topic that ordinarily no one heeds.

Mr. Humphry Ward proved to be no strong attraction. I neither heard nor saw him, but I would hazard a conviction that all his art criticism contained nothing better than a child's story which I heard a few days ago, and which I shall have to tell at the risk of its already being known to you, for I don't know where it came from. A little girl looking at Correggio's Magdalen: "Why, that lady is dawdling! she is reading a book when she ought to be dressing!" Maudlin—dawdlin! Tell this to Mr. Ward if it is new to you.

I hope your eyes are so much better that you need not get a maid to finish my short letter and so miss the Correggio story. . . .

August 6, 1895.

. . . Perhaps you are all but aboard ship while I sit inquiring of vacancy. There are a dozen obvious remarks on the tip of my tongue but they shall go no further. I am thinking of you, and wishing for you, and often in my weariness at not being able to mend things, all but wish the whole contest over, and all of us settled in the Kingdom of Heaven; a very simple arrangement not so feasible as in olden days. If the Kingdom of Heaven comes, we are to do our part in bringing it about, and that means patience at one time and activity at another. I ask myself when I go to bed, what have you done today to make the Kingdom come? and wonder whether sitting over my desk can have any such tendency. The matter is not clear ; much clearer is the case of the good daughter, sister, friend who tries to make the world pleasanter or more tolerable for her kith and kin.

This is only to say that I am bearing you in mind, and wishing for you the only prayer which I think acceptable. . . .

September 22, 1895.

I have just written to a man in South Carolina declining to read and give an opinion of his translation of a Tannhäuser of 540 pages (he asked for only two or three cantos). Luckily he sent me some fifty lines of "dedication," which was enough

to show that he was not the man for the business. This is the way people conspire against your time, when very little of it is left. I have two other *attentats* of like sort to dispose of. These things are obstacles to one's doing what one would. . . .

Beware of dukes, even of earls (not that you are in danger for the same reason as the Vanderbilts, but there are other reasons). I don't want you living in England because it is so far off, both in space and in manners and customs, from America. Neither do I wish you settled in Bohemia or in Germany. There are no Max Piccolominis in Bohemia or Austria and never were. I adore the finer Italians; still I should part with you reluctantly to the best of them, though I don't feel warranted in refusing a Confalonieri.

My house was filled up a week ago. It is something to recover five people who have been trusted to railroads, some of them for three months. William James looked in yesterday, having been changing places for about that time and doing nothing but draw in the air. He meant, he said, to memorialize our President and Fellows to the effect that no intellectual work should be imposed upon or permitted to professors, meaning, I gather, that they would be more useful with fine health without further advances. He was amazed that I could look so well after a summer spent at my desk and thought I must have a marvelous constitution. I

am alive no doubt and well enough, but not well enough to work under the renewal of college work. I will own that I look upon this with some aversion and this makes me think that I had better retire after this year. I should have enough to do without the college, though the question of having enough to live upon is to be asked, but I could never stay on for that reason, of course. Just now the reopening of the college will be very inconvenient for the work I am doing. That takes all my time and even now drags on slowly. I wish I were doing something which would be interesting to tell you. It does not interest even me; still it must be done. Were I made a man of leisure for a year or two, I could read the best books with my girls, bring up my Dante to an advanced point—I used to read Dante with my wife and occasionally others in Stockbridge. There are quantities of things which I wish to study; I don't know that I would not undertake the Slavic languages. (There is a very bright man hereabout just now who would serve me there.) No fear of not having enough to do, and if one be stopped suddenly in the midst of it, what then? . . .

Monday Evening, 23rd *December*, 1895.

I have repented keenly of my moping to you, but I may say that if you preferred to have me mope when the mood was on, I have had the luck of the

wicked by getting your most affectionate response. You shall not be tried again if I have any control over this pen. It is quite true that I am extremely tired and yet incapable of taking, or profiting by, rest. It is a great while since I remitted work for a day, unless possibly I spent a day out of doors in the rose-season. If roses could last the year through it would be much better. Christmas is always a strain to me. I have a lot of people to look after and never am pleased with what I send them. This time I have not taken so much pains.

A complete change of habitual thoughts would be a good plan, but the good plans are the impossible ones. I am thoroughly weary of ballads. For months I have been doing the most uninteresting and tiresome work on Indexes. This is pretty nearly finished, but I have a good bit to do of another kind, and feel no more interest in the business. But while I am explaining how I got into my moping, I must seem to be moping again. So we will explain no more.

I did not send you William James's lecture because it had relation to my own state of mind. It had been lying here for you more than a month, and I did not imagine that you would take means to possess yourself of it. It is an uncommonly good piece, is n't it? for its fervor of conviction and fresh and vigorous expression. Will has lately taken to giving lectures, or speeches, at girls' colleges, and

is fascinated with his hearers, whom he tells me that he addresses with unrestrained affectionate flattery. He will go anywhere to give a lecture to girls, he says. There are enough girls in the country to keep him tolerably busy if this gets out. So far I think he has had this pleasure only twice.

I went myself to Radcliffe College for one hour some ten days ago, but not to make an address. "Psychology" covers everything and excuses everything to W. J. He goes straight at the psyche. It cannot be but that he charms them all. I am as much charmed with him as anybody.

I never was so ashamed of my country as during the last fortnight.[1] The folly and wicked recklessness was never paralleled. The country is now properly frightened, but great mischief has been done in the interim: and how do we appear to the world? Even Cleveland was carried away by "politics." Well, I agree to all that you and Mr. Ward are saying about it. So glad that you are reading with Mr. Ward again.

I have been going through a great quantity of Slavic stuff—40 or 50 volumes perhaps—with a reader, alas, and not with my own eyes. Very small profit in a literary way, and the only comfort is that it will help a worthy man a little.

I have gone back to reading Miss Austen in the evenings, with more enjoyment than ever. Happy

[1] The time of the "Venezuela Incident."

Christmas, dearest M. I shall end with words which always go to my heart when you use them: more and more, your loving

✠ FRA FRA. ✠

June 20, 1896.

. . . I have been at the mercy of the college, the slave of Faculty and Committees. Only yesterday at the end of the day did I achieve my emancipation by finishing the reading of a large pile of examination books (repeating 66 points 77 times).

The roses, poor things, have had to see to themselves this past week and more, but this morning, having begun by cutting off dead or dying blooms, I took out a dear young English girl — the only young English girl I have ever known — to look them over, and they enjoyed her approval and praise. . . . She leaves America in about a week, and I do not expect ever to see her again. She has been very happy in America and I doubt whether she will be equally so in Europe. . . .

You know I was almost as desperate about my roses as you were about yours; yours burned, mine frozen. I planted 50 or 60 new ones, many of which are bearing fairly, and some of my old ones revived under good treatment (including severe cutting), so that this morning I have an extremely pretty show and should like to have you see it. Of all roses, to have only one, I should prefer Gloire de Margottin;

but who would have only one? Who would go without Mrs. John Laing or Marie Baumann? Of course it is as with women: only one may be perfect and compounded of every creature's best, but one must be permitted to like and admire several others for several virtues. Now Gloire de M., though I have never known her to fail to charm, is not so prim in her dress as more faultless beauties are, has robes loosely flowing and not severely pinned: I am not sure that everybody would like her best, and I don't care to have it so. If I could arrange society, every nice girl, every girl whatever, should stand highest in at least one man's estimation and worship, and I should like to have it nearly so with the roses.

Well, today I went out to morning service with that dear little English girl. Our temple was too hot. I shortened the service. On reflection I don't think I am satisfied with my little girl as to roses. She admired doubtless, but I can't recall anything like ecstasy, anything like worship, though I put into her hands some most worshipful things. On the whole, this little English girl did not gain by being presented to the roses. I did not feel this at the time, but it has come to me since. Hence we deduce a rule: before you give your heart to a woman set her before a bed of well-chosen roses. She may have every virtue, commonly so reckoned, and yet be deeply wanting.

But O! to have my dear M. here this afternoon at 5½, for I suppose the garden will never look better on the whole; but Monday would answer, for then Crested Moss will be out in quantity. I wish you may be having many of these yourself. And then I could wish myself in your garden with you. But I must own, and perhaps heed, one thing: not only has time failed me to do my humble duty to these fair things, but bodily strength. I could not keep at the work for a day or for five or six hours together. And if I can't do this, have I a right to go on with roses?

My plan now is to indulge in two or three days of irresponsible life—which will be interrupted, for Commencement is coming and my classmates will be gathering for a 50th anniversary! And then, having cleared off this desk, which is a chaos of letters, memoranda, and books, to set to work to do the last thing for the concluding and long delayed volume of my ballad-book. To do this I do not feel either well inclined or fairly capable, but I must make no excuse of health or weariness. . . .

I do not expect ever to come to Stockbridge again! I have even been asking whether it is desirable to live on as I am living. Still I have not resigned my place. I am to try for one year more to do my part. It will be for only one year. I have not lost an hour from college this past year; I made a point of that. But I did my last piece of

work, with a sort of fear that I might not finish it. It is finished, however. Now let me finish my book after such fashion as I may (the trouble is that much is expected by confrères in my line) and then let what will come. What will *not* come is that I shall ever think less of my dear and faithful M. or love her less.

SUNDAY, *July* 14, 1896.

. . . [P. S.] Here is a little girl's phrase which you may present to anyone who is exposed to sight-seeing. What an overwhelming oppression in that way our countrymen are taking upon themselves at this season!

"Zat is a very beautiful sing: but I don't sink so."

[*The last*]

CAMBRIDGE, *August* 14, 1896.

On the 12th you were to move on to Northeast Harbor. Whether at Bar Harbor or Northeast you would have been suffering till yesterday from the sun. One is ashamed to be the victim of 8° or 10° rise in the thermometer, and especially when one can keep within doors, but I have been capable of no work during the "heated term." But a letter to you is far from being work; only one must not write too much of doleful feelings, still less of doleful emotions. Doctors have been at me.

My letters have been taken up with the concluding scenes in the career of my dear Philip Abbot, who lost his life at Mt. Lefroy twelve days ago. I was deeply afflicted by this loss. He had been for 16 years (since his 12th year) very familiar at our house and was my boy Frank's most intimate friend. The father and mother have all that time been friends of ours. I counted upon him to be the friend of my children. He was extraordinarily loved and esteemed by a great number of people of all places and professions, as was shown by letters after his death, and by people coming all the way from Milwaukee to his funeral.

I went to see the father on Sunday, afraid to face him. He received me most affectionately, and said that he was on the point of coming to comfort *me!* and it was to that that he devoted himself. The mother came down to see me, a delicate woman, very high-souled, and she talked to me for half an hour, with no passionate effusion, of the consolations she found. I have never known a mother and son to have such an entire intimacy as these two had, and yet she was neither destroyed nor cast down. On Monday, one of the hot days, was the funeral . . . and it was made very long. We walked a long way from the Chapel of Mt. Auburn to the grave, preceded by an angelic choir, who sang uninterruptedly, . . . and also at the grave. The only effectual consolation is to accept the belief

that in the thousand years which with God are but as yesterday the present grief may be reconciled with love. I have been reading Job, and when I read that book I wonder that I do not read it every day. It does not explain things, in showing how men have suffered before us, but it does teach us to bow our heads and not to utter things which we do not understand. (Why the 14th Chapter, the most pathetic and unanswerable outpouring of despair, should be included in the English Service is an enigma. . . .) St. Paul tires me, with his 15th Corinthians, which I hold not at all to the purpose. There is not much to be said. No single chapter of the Bible, Old Testament or New, suits the case, but there are passages in the Psalms and in Revelations which one accepts and these, supported by music, may at least calm the feelings and suggest hope. The one good thing in the Episcopal Service—or, rather, I will say, the thing that always affects me—is in the passage in which thanks are offered for those who have finished their course and rest from their labors. And Wednesday "I Heard a Voice from Heaven" was sung with such sweetness as would draw tears from a stone. However, though the music I heard was lovely, a great mass is more impressive, more convincing, to me. I say, "convincing" because the tones are a voice from Heaven.

And now my dearest M., how much I have

thought of your sweetness in coming to me between the two journeys. And what a delight it was to see you looking so fresh. I ought to keep a Kodak to take a picture every time I see you. The impression is sharp and unblurred of your countenance that Thursday afternoon, but I should like to have it fixed. Think what a treasure to have your face to look at every time we met, which alas for me, (but blessing on you!) would now be rare. I might have had a large portfolio.— [Here follows a charming list of remembered meetings.] And I want you in a many-flowered pretty gown, standing on your piazza. But people never remember things in time. If ever I fall in with a lover worth the name, I may suggest to him what he might do.

I hope you are really enjoying Mt. Desert and will not take a cold or have any drawback.

Au revoir and benedicite.

Your f. and f.

✠ FRA FRA. ✠

MAR 31 1931